

# DRAMATICS

An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

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By J. F. FOSTER

## THREE WALLS OF MAGIC

By ROBERT W. WASTE

## I KNEW HIM WHEN

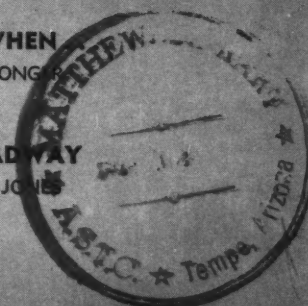
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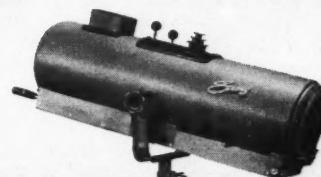


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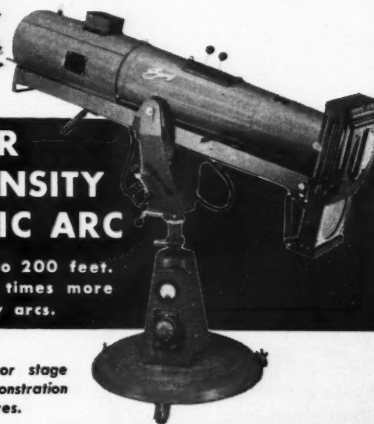
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**R**OBERT W. Waste, New York City, author of *Three Walls of Magic*, writes about himself: "Failure as an actor led to my success as a writer. Miss Marion Underwood, my Glendale, California, High School dramatics teacher, couldn't bring out any acting talents, because there were none. Yet this great lady instilled in me her deep love and keen appreciation of the fabulous world of theater, which has not waned in 15 years. I wrote a successful article about my classmate Terry Moore, met such outstanding actresses as Helen Hayes and Katherine Cornell. So I'm glad I can't act; I'd rather write about it and my acting friends."

**R**ICHARD C. Johnson, Sponsor of Troupe 771, Barrington, Illinois, Consolidated High School, is National Program Chairman for the forthcoming Children's Theater Conference, which will be held from August 26 through August 29 at Michigan City, Indiana. His article, *Planning for a Better Theater in a Better World*, is more than just a pre-view of the program of the Conference; it is, in a way, encouragement for all of us that we are making progress in educational theater and that our goals are slowly coming within our grasp.

**F**OR his Best of Broadway, Mr. Jones has selected *Sunrise at Campobello*, a play built on actual events in the early life of the late Franklin D. Roosevelt. Here is another play, like *Tall Story* of last month, which will be most favorably received by the high school theater after it is released for amateur production. Mr. Jones reviews only those Broadway plays which in his judgment can be done by high schools everywhere.

**O**UR Thespian of the Month is Robert Clarke, an honorary Thespian of Troupe 822, Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Maybelle Conger, Sponsor and Oklahoma Regional Director, tells us about Mr. Clarke in her intimate article, *I Knew Him When*. Mr. Clarke is successful in motion pictures, radio, and television. He appeared in movies in *My Man Godfrey*, *The Benny Goodman Story*, *Timbuktu*, just to mention a few; in television he appeared in *Dragnet*, *Sea Hunt*, *The Gale Storm Show*, and *Racket Squad*.

**J.** F. FOSTER, Assistant Professor of Speech and Theater, Brooklyn, N.Y., College, had an interesting and added pleasure last summer during his European tour. He not only saw a German play in its natural environment, but slept under the hero's own roof, dined at his table, and chatted with his kin — Goetz von Berlichingen — the Knight of the Iron Hand. Don't miss reading Mr. Foster's unusual article, *A Ghost Comes Alive*.

**M**R. Trumbo and Pollyann conclude their series on Pageantry with *The Night of the Pageant*; and Dr. Dusenbury ends his two year series on the American Musical Theater with *Maturity: 1940 to the Present*. Both of these series will be reprinted in booklets during the summer.

**P**ROF. Friederich, who will be with us again next year, concludes another year of excellent *Brief Views* of the latest books on theater; and Dr. Blank includes in his *Plays of the Month* *Strictly Formal*, *The Great Sebastians*, *The Loud Red Patrick*, and *Greensleeves' Magic*.

**T**HUS another school year draws to its close. It has been another good year for DRAMATICS Magazine. To all our authors, editors, and advertisers who have made it possible we are humbly grateful.

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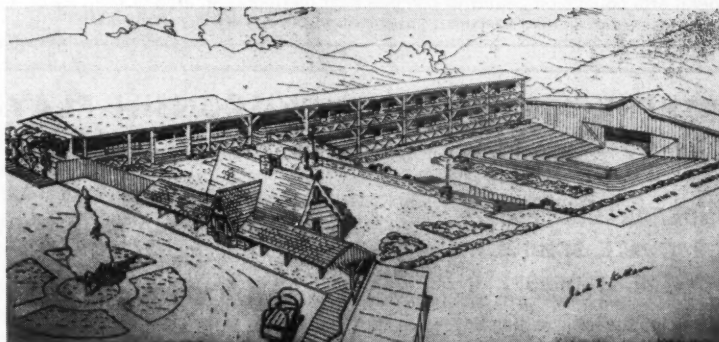
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**SUMMER SESSION**

June 22 — August 14, 1959

**FALL SEMESTER**

**Begins September 14, 1959**

For further information write  
W. V. O'Connell, Chairman

# As I See It . . .

## WE REACH THE HALFWAY MARK

**N**O other theater in the country is like the high school theater. Some of the best educational theater is being done by our high schools — and some of the worst. While other theaters come and go, the high school continues to grow. More young men and women participate in the high school theater than in any other, and more people see high school plays each year than in any other medium. As new high schools are being constructed and the high school population increases, so grows The National Thespian Society in membership, in the circulation of its magazine, *DRAMATICS*, and in its services.

Let us pause then at this halfway mark of our observance of our 30th Anniversary to take stock of our progress since the opening of school last fall. Our growth in membership has at the time of this writing exceeded our fondest expectations. We have granted 136 new Charters, and are anticipating granting 200 by June 30, the close of our fiscal year. We hope to grant Charter 2000 before June 30. Nearly 30 of our 50 states will meet their quotas for new troupes set last fall. And over 30,000 high school students will be honored by membership in this organization during this current school term.

New records will be reached for *DRAMATICS* both in circulation and in the sale of advertising space. Anticipating a monthly circulation of 30,000, we reached the 31,500 monthly average — 1500 over our goal. And all advertising space quotas were not only reached, but passed for all eight issues.

Our services have likewise increased in proportion to our growth. Over 9000 publications on theater were distributed gratis to our member schools; over 2000 complimentary subscriptions to *DRAMATICS* granted to both member schools and other deserving organizations. Over \$3000 was saved in the reduction of royalties to deserving schools. And finally nearly 500 requests for information concerning plays, scenery, costumes, and other theater needs were answered.

Finally, approximately 5000 high school students and teachers attended our 25 regional conferences held this past school year throughout the country — and your editor attended nearly all of them except those on the west coast. Here is live, enthusiastic theater — theater vibrant with youth, exciting both to participant and observer, encouraging to all who make theater possible for our high school students.

Yes, it has been a good year — and there are four more months to go before we ring down the curtain on our 30th Anniversary. Before us all lie new horizons, for the high school theater is unique. There is no other theater organization like it anywhere!

## THE "LORENA SHOULTZ" AUDITORIUM

**D**OWN in Grapeland, Texas, Mrs. Lorena Shultz was especially honored by having the auditorium of Grapeland's new high school dedicated "Lorena Shultz Auditorium" on April 5. Mrs. Shultz has been a teacher of speech and dramatic arts at Grapeland for more than 15 years.

Mrs. Shultz is sponsor of Troupe 129, installed at Grapeland in 1946. This troupe under her guidance has been one of our most active and progressive troupes. We all had the honor and pleasure of meeting Mrs. Shultz at our National Dramatic Arts Conference last summer.

Mrs. Herman Beazley, Chairman of a committee appointed by the Grapeland PTA states: "Her students have consistently won honors in scholastic competition as well as always being available for local programs of entertainment for the community. We are happy that this recognition is being given her."

## NATIONAL COMMUNITY THEATER CENTER

**T**HE National Community Theater Center at the University of Wisconsin invites theater students and community theater directors and leaders to attend its second summer session, June 22-July 17. In an intensive course of seminars and laboratories an outstanding faculty including John Wray Young, President of AETA, Margaret Mary Young, and Robert E. Card, Director of the Wisconsin Idea Theater, and other leaders in the field will conduct discussions and studies of the philosophy, methods, and goals of community theater direction, management, and leadership. The University offers graduate or undergraduate credit to qualified enrollees. Enrollment is limited. For further information write: Nancy R. Hoffman, Wisconsin Idea Theater, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.

## ZETA PHI ETA AWARD HONORING WINIFRED WARD

**T**HE Zeta Phi Eta Award is given annually to recognize the contribution to Children's Theater by new producing groups who have stimulated and developed high quality theater for children in their areas. The award will be given to an institutional, community, or professional group producing an annual season of live plays for child audiences. A citation and a \$50 prize will be awarded.

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If you feel that your high school and Thespians Troupe can qualify, write to Vern Adix, 1532 Michigan Ave., Salt Lake City 5, Utah, for complete information sheets.

### THREE THOUGHTS OF THE MONTH

**T**WO difficulties present themselves when we face the problem of introducing the theater into education. First, it is complex. It should not be attempted except by fully-trained teachers, not teachers of speech, mind you. ... Second, there is the lack of continuous contact with the theater. ... The Professional theater is concentrated in ten city blocks in New York City. How can the pupil, whose sensitivity to drama has been aroused, see the best the medium can offer?—Dean F. Curtis Canfield, School of Drama, Yale.

Lengthen the school day until 5 p.m. This came from the influential Exchange Club of Philadelphia. The Club is made up of "opinion

### SUMMER MOVIES

**THE BIG CIRCUS**, drama, Victor Mature, Rhonda Fleming. (AA)

**IT HAPPENED TO JANE**, comedy, Doris Day, Jack Lemmon. (COL)

**THE LAST ANGRY MAN**, drama, Paul Muni, David Wayne. (COL)

**MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT**, drama, Fredric March, Kim Novak, Glenda Farrell. (COL)

**COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS**, drama, Deborah Kerr, Rossano Brazzi. (MGM)

**THE BIG OPERATOR**, drama, Mickey Rooney. (MGM)

**NORTH BY NORTHWEST**, drama, Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint. (MGM)

**DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP**, comedy, Jerry Lewis. (PAR)

**LAST TRAIN FROM GUN HILL**, western, Kirk Douglas, Carolyn Jones. (PAR)

**THE FIVE PENNIES**, drama, Danny Kaye, Barbara Bel Geddes. (PAR)

**THE MAN WHO UNDERSTOOD WOMEN**, drama, Henry Fonda, Leslie Caron. (20TH-FOX)

**HOLIDAY FOR LOVERS**, comedy, Jane Wyman, Clifton Webb, Gary Crosby. (20TH-FOX)

**THE ALASKANS**, drama, John Wayne, Robert Mitchum. (20TH-FOX)

**SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL**, drama, James Cagney. (UA)

**HOLE IN THE HEAD**, drama, Frank Sinatra, Edward G. Robinson. (UA)

**SUMMER OF THE 17TH DOLL**, drama, Ernest Borgnine, Anne Baxter. (UA)

**THIS EARTH IS MINE**, drama, Rock Hudson, Jean Simmons. (UNIV)

**THE NUN'S STORY**, drama, Audrey Hepburn, Peter Finch. (WAR)

**JOHN PAUL JONES**, drama, Robert Stack, Bette Davis. (WAR)

**LOOK BACK IN ANGER**, drama, Claire Bloom, Richard Burton. (WAR)

makers." Their opinion: "There is no good reason for turning our children into the streets so early in the afternoon ..."

Why is it that the more people pass through the public schools, the more public criticism we get of education? Dean Edward K. Graham, Boston University, does not know the answer, but he knows how to pose the question: "The most significant fact about our public schools is that virtually every able-bodied person goes through them. It might be expected that public approbation of the schools would follow. Quite the contrary. Criticism has increased almost in proportion to the increased proportion of the population exposed to them."

### \$750 IN CASH AWARDS

**PLAYS**, the drama magazine for young people, announces a playwriting contest for one-act plays. There will be \$750 in cash awards for original one-act plays suitable for production by young people. The contest closes on July 31, 1959. If you can write, here is an opportunity to broaden the one-act play field.

For more information write to Contest Editor, Plays Magazine, 8 Arlington Street, Boston 16, Mass.

### ATTENTION ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS

**B**E SURE to recommend to your architect who is planning your new school building Century's new brochure, "Remote Control Systems," so that he will be fully aware of the latest in stage and auditorium lighting. This brochure is well illustrated, tersely written, and quickly understandable. There is no longer any justifiable excuse for poorly equipped school theaters.

This brochure is available to engineers and architects upon request. Address all correspondence to Century Lighting, Inc., 521 West 43 Street, New York City 36.

### SUMMER THEATER AT TCU

**W**ERE I down Fort Worth, Texas, way this summer, I would make it a point to see one or all of the three plays which will be presented by Texas Christian University. They are *The Innocents*, *Fallen Angels*, and *The Hut*. Henry Hammack and Cleve Haubold will be the directors.

### VOLUME XXX: FINIS

**A**ND so we close Volume XXX of DRAMATICS. We sincerely hope you enjoyed most of the articles, features, and pictures as much as we enjoyed compiling each issue for you. We shall all be back in October with the October issue of Volume XXXI.

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### NATIONAL CATHOLIC THEATER CONFERENCE

**O**N August 18, 19, 20 the Twelfth Biennial Convention of the National Catholic Theater Conference will be held at Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana. NCTC members, directors and students, from all parts of the United States and Canada will meet in three days of stimulating sessions and productions. Distinguished speakers will include Dr. Robert Breen of Northwestern University in a Chamber Theater Lecture Demonstration, Marta Becket of New York in a program of Dance Mimes and Fran Allison speaking on Television as a career. John Wray Young and Margaret Mary Young will give their "Answers to Community Theater Problems." Teenagers will enjoy a special Theater Workshop. From this group a star cast will be selected to present a Starlight Theater production the last night of the Convention. Following auditions, a number of scholarships will be offered to deserving high school seniors.

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for further particulars write:

Director, Banff School of Fine Arts, Banff, Canada



In this scene from the Pasadena Playhouse hit, "The Magnificent Yankee," John Armstrong, student, plays opposite Broadway star, Adrienne Marden, as she portrays Mrs. Oliver Wendell Holmes. Los Angeles Times critic, Geoffrey Warren, made special note of John's performance in his review, stating... "he brings a very bright moment into the show with his well-planned characterization."

Excellence is never accidental—it comes with work and skillful guidance. Your calibre as a performer will always reflect the calibre of your professional training.

**TRAIN FOR STAGE, TELEVISION AND MOTION PICTURES AT AMERICA'S FOREMOST COLLEGE OF THEATRE ARTS,**



# A Ghost Comes Alive

By J. F. FOSTER

**D**ID you ever see a real, live ghost? If you are a theater fan, you could say "Yes," although you may never have thought of it in quite this way. For what are the characters in a play but the spirits of men and women long dead — or who never lived at all? Of course it takes the body of a very solid, living actor to materialize them, and that makes quite a difference; for during their brief hour of life on the stage they do not seem eerie phantoms, half seen, half felt, but (if the actor is not merely a "ham" but an artist) they become more real than he is.

A true artist of course needs nothing but his talent to re-vitalize the spirit of a character; he can bring him to life anywhere, at any time. (Dumas once said that all he needed for a play was a couple of boards and a passion.) But environment does help. If the setting is just right — the lights creating the proper atmosphere, the costumes looking and feeling like the clothes the fellow wore, the scenery suggesting the place where he lived — it is easier to conjure his ghost back to life.

In some cases it is possible to go beyond even the best of theatrical tricks and stage the action on the very spot where it actually transpired, even within the very walls that once echoed to the character's own voice. In such cases (if the place adapts well to the needs of the theater) a new tang is added: history becomes real; you feel the presence of the ghosts even after the actors have departed.

If you have attended a performance of *The Lost Colony* on Roanoke Island, North Carolina, you will know what this means. To see the colonists — living again in the bodies of the actors — toil-



Jagsthausen: scenes in the palace of the Bishop of Bamberg are played in the entrance to the castle's guest wing

ing and reveling, loving and hating, hoping and fearing on the very soil where they faced the ordeal of the wilderness, with the embankments of Raleigh's Fort rising just behind you, makes you feel, more deeply than any book, more vividly than any play, "This is the sort of people they were; this is the way it must have happened." It is this, even more than Paul Green's script (good as it is), that has kept *The Lost Colony* running for twenty years.

Such an experience was the writer's last summer when, with his wife and daughter, he journeyed to the German village of Jagsthausen, in Franconia, just off the *Burgenstrass* (the "Castle Road"), to see a performance of Goethe's famous melodrama, *Goetz von Berlichingen — the Knight of the Iron Hand*. But with this difference: After witnessing the play in the very castle where many of the scenes had taken place, we slept under the hero's own roof, dined at his table, and chatted with his kin.

The name of Goetz von Berlichingen, though it means little to the average American, is as familiar to every German as Robin Hood is to us. In fact the two have quite a lot in common: Both robbed

the rich to succor the poor; both were devout Christians, but arch enemies of princely prelates who abused the power of the church for selfish ends; and both, although staunchly loyal to their true sovereigns, were declared outlaws by local lords and politicians. Both too were highly skilled in the use of arms. But Goetz, as a young man had lost a hand in battle, and rather than give up his military career had commissioned the local watchmaker to devise an artificial hand with which he could still wield a sword. Hence his title: "the knight with the iron hand." (This early prosthetic limb is still to be seen in the family museum at the Goetzenburg.)

In time as well as in geography, however, these two folk heroes were separated by a wide gap: Robin Hood lived — if he lived at all — somewhere around the time of the Crusades, when the feudal system was at its height. Goetz very definitely *did* live in the first half of the sixteenth century, when chivalry was breaking down before the rising power of the merchants and the petty princes of the church. This indeed was the chief source of Goetz's trouble: he was a "free baron" (almost the last), who held his fief directly from the Holy Roman Emperor and acknowledged no law but his "knightly word" and the emperor's edict. He could even wage a private war with any of his neighbors merely by declaring a "feud." Naturally he was a thorn in the flesh of the free towns, whose growing independence he resented and whose trade caravans he often raided, as well as the powerful and rapacious prelates whose foppish courts and shady intrigues he abhorred. So these enemies joined forces to "get" him, and — after many machinations and some foul play — they finally succeeded in humbling this rugged individualist. But not without help from history.

In 1524 the peasants, by now intolerably exploited by the princes of commerce and of title, broke out in bloody revolt and sought the leadership of their

(Continued on Page 31)



Jagsthausen: a corner of the courtyard of Goetzenburg castle showing main gate in center and entrance to guest wing left

# Three Walls of Magic

By ROBERT W. WASTE

**W**HAT makes a good actor? Does a natural-born Thespian need training in technique? How does a beginning player prepare himself for an acting career? These three questions were put to four of the most outstanding 1958 graduates from New York's famed American Academy of Dramatic Arts—America's oldest and foremost acting school, now in its 75th year.

Last Spring Harryetta Peterka of Charleston, Ill., and Ronald Eden of Baton Rouge, La., won the Academy's coveted annual Charles Jehlenger Award for achieving the high ideals set by its late and great president and for having the most professional approach to acting.

Meri Ann Narancic of St. Louis, Mo., received the school's yearly Speech Award for attaining the finest speech for the theater. And Thomas O'Hagan of Fernandina Beach, Fla., was considered among the year's best comedy talents by the academy.

These expert, young Thespians, age 24 to 27, know the three above problems only too well, as all are currently acting. Tom is in radio and studying on the side, while the others are doing a select, post-graduate repertory work at the academy.

## (1) What makes a good actor?

"A good actor is a good person; you can't separate the two," explains Harryetta, a statuesque girl who studied under Prof. Robert Lee Blair in Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, where her father teaches Physics.

"Actors need both humility and ego," she continues. "When they lose their ego, they just stop acting! Yet I can't see how any actor can get too egotistical with so many people... and so many things in this world that's greater than he is, like the sky!"

Meri Ann, Harryetta's best friend and room mate, is a petite and vivacious actress, once coached by Dr. Nelson Migell at Washington University in St. Louis.

"You have to love acting with all your heart," she says firmly. "Then you'll try and try again and never give up working or hoping. And you'll work hard, but then it won't be really hard if you love it."

A player has to love it so much that he can look at a barren stage, imagine a lovely room made of three plain pieces of scenery, and feel these are (as Meri Ann words it) "three walls of magic!"

Four other acting requirements are flexibility, a degree of ease, a spark of talent, and most important dramatic imagination. In the entrance audition these are the traits the American Academy's Board of Directors look for in applicants to determine which will be permitted to enroll and which will not.

"All actors need a keen sense of humor," believes Tom O'Hagan, formerly with the Jacksonville Little Theater, WWL-CBS-radio in New Orleans, and Loyola University drama class there under Dr. Alfred J. Bonomo. "Humor is important," Tom adds. "I find when things go wrong in rehearsal or back stage, all you can do is stop and laugh. It breaks the tension, and that's good too."

A good actor needs a clear voice, a flexible face, a graceful walk, and a fine memory. These can be taught in high school dramatics or private acting schools. He also needs sensitivity, empathy, sincerity, enthusiasm, dignity, intelligence, health, and natural ability. These can not be taught; he either has them or does not.

A performer should have self control in mind, body, and emotion. He must be willing to hide his own personality while assuming somebody else's on stage. Whether others do or not, he must be-

or wealth or other "by-products" of acting. This is his way of expressing himself and of serving his fellow man. He has a sound reason to be a good actor, and will be.

## (2) Does a natural-born Thespian need training in technique?

"Acting without technique is not art; it's very raw," answers Harryetta. "You can't deny form. An actor must mold his feelings to fit into that form, so the audience can see and understand."

An actor is born through God's grace, but he improves through hard study. No teacher in the world can put this God-given talent into students; he can only draw it out if it's there. He can only tell pupils what they will need to know as professional performers and prepare them to solve their own theatrical problems in later years.

When an actor is out on that stage giving a performance, he is on his own; no one can help him then. So even a natural-born player must learn how to



Three Blind Mice, Troupe 1558, Leuzinger High School, Lawndale, California, Julien R. Hughes, Sponsor

lieve in his own ability. He must try to keep a cool head and a warm heart, and try to love and understand people in order to interpret them expertly.

A fine actor is a good listener as well as a good talker, because hearing and reacting on stage to other players' dialogue is a vital part of acting too. He's got to listen well—both in the classroom and on stage during the play.

"You hear a speech on the radio or TV set with the ear-senses. But when you really listen with your brain, you understand and remember what was said," declares Ronald Eden, a Louisiana State University alumni, seen recently with the Robin Hood summer stock company near Wilmington, Delaware.

A true actor acts because he has to. He has a burning urge to be in the theater and feels he has something to give to it, not merely an interest in fame

apply his abilities to his art and know the stage fundamentals—useful in other entertainment mediums too. He must learn controlled technique to become more skillful.

For example, a natural-born, new actor may give a near-perfect performance in a scene at rehearsal but can't repeat it or sustain it if he isn't aware of how he moved or how he spoke his lines. To obtain this technique, he should train and practice—as much as doctors or lawyers do, but it must never show on stage. What makes acting an art is taking something rehearsed and memorized and making it seem as natural and spontaneous as it would be in real-life. Acting is an illusion of life.

"An actor must be true to the playwright whose dialogue he speaks, and to the director who mapped out his

(Continued on Page 30)



# I Knew Him When . . .

By MAYBELLE CONGER

IT will be hard for Robert Clarke fan club members to believe that in junior high school Bob was so bashful that he would hardly answer the roll call. But it's true and I can prove it. You see, I was Bob's junior high speech teacher. When he came into the speech class in the eighth grade I was impressed with his courteous manner and his expressive eyes. During the year the students always had a campaign assembly in which the various candidates appeared and were introduced and extolled by their campaign managers. Naturally it was very important to get a popular student for your campaign manager if you wanted to win your office. Bob was always popular with the student body so several of the boys asked him to be their campaign manager. He chose one of his best friends to campaign for, and when the fatal day came for the assembly, Bob was backstage, pale as a ghost and with his knees sounding like a trap drum solo. When his time came, he walked out on the stage and opened his mouth. Nothing came out. Not even a sigh. He was literally frozen to the spot. He tried to speak and nothing happened. Everyone in the audience was suffering with him, but finally he turned and walked off with his head bowed. I honestly believe that particular incident had more to do with Bob's determination to be an actor than anything before or since.

When the all-school play, *It Never Rains*, came around, Bob was the first one to try out. It broke my heart to have to give him a walk-on part instead of a lead, but I was afraid he might get stage fright again and freeze to the spot on the big night. As usual, Bob didn't complain but took just as active an interest in the play as if he were the leading man. I have always been fortunate enough to have most of my students as friends as well as pupils and Bob was no exception. He used to come by my home in the evenings, and we would discuss his speech problem. He confided in me that his ambition was to go into the theater, and instead of being tactful I had to open my big mouth and tell him that I thought he didn't stand a chance and that he'd better put any theatrical thoughts out of his handsome head! Well, that did it! He set that determined chin of his and went right on hoeing his row and I've been eating my words ever since! But this time I'm doing it with a relish — this is once when a teacher is glad she is wrong.

Even when I felt that Bob didn't have what it takes, I would work with him on tone color and volume. We'd read Shakespeare's "Blow blow thou winter wind" and nearly blow everyone out of

the house with gusto! It was fun, and then I'd sing the praises of my former teacher, Miss Gertrude E. Johnson of the University of Wisconsin, and urge Bob to go to school there. At that time we little dreamed that he would become one of Wisconsin's illustrious alumni. He went on to senior high and joined a little theater group and kept right on trying out for plays. I remember one time I went to see him in *As You Like It*. He had one of the leads and he not only did himself proud but he was the most handsome young man on the stage. I know he was thinking to himself all through the play, "And she said I'd never make it!" But what he didn't know was that I was thinking, "Well, old girl, I guess he showed you!"

After high school graduation he entered O.U., his state university, and became interested in radio there. There was no part too small or insignificant for him to take and do his best with, and directors appreciate such an attitude, so soon he found himself getting the juicier parts. Later he enrolled in Wisconsin University, and Miss Johnson took him under her wing (a mighty nice wing to be under considering she is Frederick March's first and most beloved teacher). He had the lead in *Ladies in Retirement* in the Wisconsin Union Theater, was a member of the exclusive Wisconsin Players, and was quite active in both the university radio station and one of the commercial stations. Bob has never been afraid of work and while others have become overnight stars and faded just as quickly, he has been slowly but surely advancing.

Then came Hollywood. There again success didn't meet him at the door, but it didn't discourage him at all. His letters were always cheerful and full of his vital interest in things and people. He is a grand letter writer, and he has been faithful in his correspondence. He never forgets me in his moments of triumph



Bob Clarke, Thespiian of the Month, with Maybelle Conger, Regional Director of Oklahoma, and Sponsor, Troupe 822, Central High School, Oklahoma City

and through the years he has wired or dropped me an airmail letter or card whenever he was going to be on radio or TV. When he comes home, he always has time for a visit. One of the kindest things he ever did will always live in my memory. A reporter friend knew he was in town and made a date at the newspaper office for Bob to have his picture made for the paper. I went down with him, thinking he was just taking me for the ride. When we got down there, he refused to have the picture taken unless they would have me in it with him. You can imagine how flattered I was and am. For remember, Bob was in junior high when he had me, and he has gone so far in his chosen profession that I cannot possibly take credit for any of his success. If anything, I feel I stood in his way with my negative attitude. However, maybe I was just the challenge he needed.

I must tell of one incident in Bob's life that has stood out in my mind above all others. A young boy who pledged his fraternity in high school was in a ghastly accident. He broke his neck while diving and was paralyzed from the neck down for several years prior to his death. Bob spent every available bit of time with that boy, and after he left for the coast, he would write long letters and always went to see him first upon his arrival in town. He didn't do it from a sense of pity or nobility — but because he *wanted to* — because he believed, along with Lloyd C. Douglas, the philosophy of investing in *people* — rather than things — in sharing with others. Edwin Markham said, "There is a destiny which makes us brothers; none goes his way alone; all that we send into the lives of others, comes back into our own." I like to believe that some of the wonderful things Bob did for that boy are now coming back into *his* life. No one deserves more success or more happiness.

I'm proud to say, "I knew him when!"



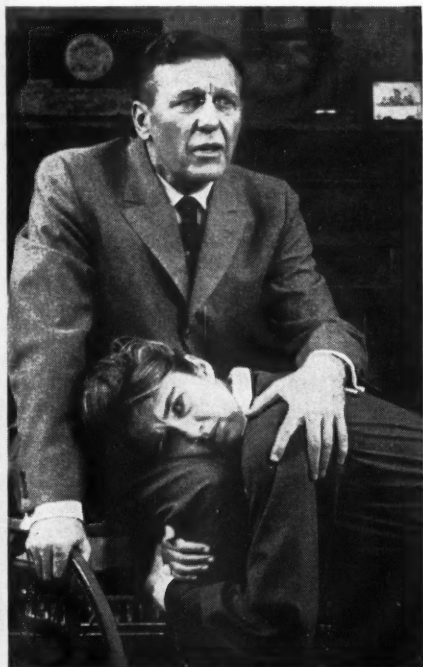
# Best of Broadway

By CHARLES L. JONES

DORE Schary's drama, *Sunrise at Campobello*, opened at the Cort Theater on Broadway in January, 1958, and is now well into its second year with more than 500 performances to its credit.

The structure of *Sunrise at Campobello* is built on actual events in the early life of one of America's most dynamic statesmen and war-time presidents, the late Franklin D. Roosevelt; its conflict lies in F.D.R.'s dogged determination to conquer the crippling effects of polio and return to a normal, active life; its theme is noble in illustrating that man can meet adversity and misfortune head-on and emerge victorious.

In the opening scene, F.D.R. is depicted as a vigorous 38-year-old man who has just returned to the summer cottage after a refreshing swim with three of his sons, Franklin Jr., James, and Elliott. Apparently brimming over with vitality, he is suddenly seized with sharp pains in his back which he attempts to take lightly as a touch of lumbago. The pain grows progressively worse, and shortly thereafter he is paralyzed from the waist down from the swift ravages of polio. From this point on *Sunrise at Campobello* concerns itself mainly with F.D.R.'s tremendous physical and emotional adjustment to a life of invalidism while at the same time stubbornly refusing to yield himself to it.



Franklin D. Roosevelt (Ralph Bellamy) and Eleanor (Mary Fickett) are pictured in a dramatic scene from Dore Schary's poignant drama, *Sunrise at Campobello*, currently playing at the Cort Theater on Broadway.

The audience has no opportunity to pity or feel sorry for F.D.R. in his time of affliction. Some scenes which could have been played as pathetic and pitiable are lifted to heroic proportions. For example, Sara Delano Roosevelt, F.D.R.'s Mother, portrayed as a pampering, over-anxious woman openly opposed to politics, attempts to discourage Franklin from any further political ambitions. She insists he retire to their family home at Hyde Park and live a life of leisure. Her attitude aroused rebellion in F.D.R., and he is more determined than ever to overcome his handicap. When Mrs. Roosevelt departs from the room, F.D.R. struggles to rise from his wheelchair with the aid of his crutches. He falls to the floor. Dragging himself back into the chair, he tries again with more courage than before. Such scenes as these are poignant and deeply moving but never pathetic.

The play projects a magnificent character study of F.D.R. as he was known only to his intimates in those fateful years. Not even a wheelchair could undermine his constant exuberance and enthusiasm or his ability to be warmly human and optimistic when things looked most gloomy.

The continuity of the play never grows stark or drab in any sense; on the contrary, there are many instances of warm, glowing humor and even a few rollicking laughs. In one scene, meant to be amusing, Al Smith pays a visit to F.D.R. In the course of conversation, Smith remarks, "The first duty of a politician is to get elected... then he can fight for causes."

For obvious reasons, there was no emphasis on politics in *Sunrise at Campobello*. A few incidents involving political connotation were of course necessary to give a faithful representation of F.D.R.'s life.

The play ends happily and triumphantly on F.D.R.'s return to public life on June 26, 1924, during the Democratic National Convention. For the first time since he was stricken with polio 34 months earlier, F.D.R. rises alone and takes 10 steps to a rostrum in Madison Square Garden to nominate Al Smith as a candidate for President.

A significant overtone emerges from *Sunrise at Campobello* and is strongly implied in one of F.D.R.'s lines in the script. He says, "You must learn to crawl before you walk. Invalidism is lonely. I've learned true humility." Because F.D.R. was born and raised in an environment of wealth and snobbishness, critics are inclined to believe that his struggle to conquer polio gave him a deeper insight into the real values of life and taught him the humility which attributed in part to his later greatness as the President of the United States.

In the starring role of Franklin D. Roosevelt is the veteran screen and stage actor, Ralph Bellamy. Because the late President can still be vividly remembered by most of the American public,



Ralph Bellamy portrays the late Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the drama, *Sunrise at Campobello*, the story of F.D.R.'s battle to conquer polio.

Bellamy had a monumental task in developing a plausible characterization which would genuinely suggest F.D.R.

Bellamy does an amazing job of looking and sounding like F.D.R. through the familiar signs of recognition in the form of the pince-nez, cigarette holder, and the square, tilted-up chin. Even more amazing, however, is Bellamy's keen insight into the inner character of F.D.R. and his ability to project it to the audience in such a way that you are tremendously moved by a dynamic and magnetic personality as opposed to watching what could have been a cartoonist's caricature.

Portraying Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the late President, is Mary Fickett, daughter of the late Homer Fickett, who was former director of the Theater Guild of the Air.

Next to Mr. Bellamy, the best performance in the play is given by Henry Jones in the personage of Louis McHenry Howe, who was F.D.R.'s devoted physician for many years and his adviser. Jones was chief laugh contributor with his wry humor and raucous voice. Jones is probably best remembered for his amusing portrayal of LeRoy, the janitor, on both the stage and screen in Maxwell Anderson's *The Bad Seed*.

Alan Bunce breezes jovially on and off the stage in the role of Governor Al Smith. Bunce starred for six years on radio as Albert on the popular "Ethel and Albert" series.

As author and co-producer of *Sunrise at Campobello*, Dore Schary embarks on a new epoch in his theatrical career. Schary has been known for a number of years as a Hollywood movie executive, including the post as Executive Vice-president in Charge of Production for M-G-M. He severed his relations with Hollywood in 1956 and turned to play writing, producing, and directing on Broadway. In addition to writing *Sunrise at Campobello*, Schary recently directed one of Broadway's latest arrivals, *Majority of One*, starring Gertrude Berg and Cedric Hardwicke.

# Planning for a Better Theater in a Better World

By RICHARD C. JOHNSON

THERE is more going on behind the scenes than applying grease paint and following cue sheets, and there are broader goals and purposes in the educational theater than mere entertainment or making money. The thinkers and planners and doers (your director and many others like him) are a part of something big, something exciting and important. And so, in turn, are you.

Leaders of the world are coming to realize that the kind and quality of entertainment we enjoy can formulate or dispell prejudices, enrich or impoverish our thought, and make us petty or big enough to embrace all of mankind in a common bond of respect and understanding. This has led many nations to engage in programs of cultural exchange whereby the creative efforts of their people might be shared across national boundaries.

Educators too are attaching new significance to the importance of the arts both as a source of personal enrichment and as a stimulus to the growth of healthy creative imagination. School administrators met recently in a national convention to explore these values and the means of achieving them. Drama had a significant place in their planning.

As a Thespian you are already a part of this important growth process because you have discovered the thrill and tasted the rewards of participation in a purposeful dramatic arts program. If you are in one of the many Thespian schools which produce plays for children, you know the added excitement of making an important contribution to the growth and development of a new generation.

Recognizing the need for this kind of experience, your director along with hundreds of other directors, actors, writers and publishers, will travel to Michigan City, Indiana, this summer to meet in the National Children's Theater Conference. From August 26 through August 29 they will be actively concerned with what they can do—and what you can do—to provide a more meaningful theater experience for future Thespians and for children everywhere in the world.

The conference theme will be "Big People for a Small World." With double meanings intended, this refers to those who, by what they can write or say or produce, are big in the small world of children. It also suggests the goal of building those intellectual, emotional,

moral, ethical, spiritual, and aesthetic values which will help to make a new generation "big" enough to live effectively in a world made "small" by the many discoveries and inventions which creative thought can produce.

This theme embraces the hope and belief that good theater, along with all the arts, can make a worthy contribution toward a child's growth in useful knowledge, his development as a responsible social being, and his personal enrichment through creative expression and the stimulus to imagination which is inherent in the magic of theater. This "magic" is difficult to define, but you know it well if you have ever performed for a child audience and felt their sparkling response to a good production. You know the thrill of having created a memorable event in lives that will be better because you were there.

That makes you one of the "big" people in a small world. But a Children's Theater Conference would not be necessary if we were satisfied with our "bigness." We can be influenced by others who are bigger than ourselves and so continue to grow.

A very big person indeed will be at the center of activity in this summer's Conference. He is John Allen of BBC, who has agreed to come to this country for the Conference and a pre-conference workshop in children's theater and creative dramatics. He will be the keynote speaker at the opening banquet and will work actively throughout the week with Conference participants.

Mr. Allen has been a key figure in the International Theater Institute of UNESCO, and recently this interest sent him on a tour of Australia and New Zealand doing theater seminars and lecturing. He has written many books (*Masters of British Drama*, *Great Moments in the Theater*, etc.) and continues actively as a writer in addition to producing four or five programs per week for the BBC. With all this he eagerly accepts opportunities to be of service anywhere in the world.

Dr. Paul Kozelka of Columbia University recently described him as "a practical dreamer, a well organized and persuasive speaker, a charmer, a thinker, and on top of it all, he listens." With much of the program being built around his part in it, the warmth of his person-

ality and the depth of his insight should invade every corner of the Conference. His influence on Children's Theater in this country and around the world will be significant.

Another headliner at the Children's Theater Conference will come from outside the field of theater. He is Willard Johnson, President of the Committee for International Economic Growth, a non-partisan organization set up last year at the suggestion of President Eisenhower. Prior to this assignment he was Vice President of the National Conference of Christians and Jews; and before that, Secretary-General of World Brotherhood, with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Assuming the importance of good theater in reflecting the nature of society and speculating on its significance as a social force, we are asking Mr. Johnson to define for us the kind of world our hands can help to build.

Of special interest at the Conference will be a new technique never before used in a full production for children, although it has been done very successfully for adults on both stage and television. Perhaps your school has done Chamber Theater productions of stories written for adults.

Dr. Robert Breen of Northwestern University is the creator of the Chamber Theater idea—a technique for staging narrative literature. Consistent with the theme of the Conference, it shows the way to dramatizing the works of "big people" in the field of children's literature other than dramatists. Dr. Breen will present a lecture demonstration of Chamber Theater for children followed by a complete production of a children's story.

In much the same way that you will pursue special interests in your Eighth National Dramatic Arts Conference at Indiana University next year, members of the Children's Theater Conference will spend part of their time in seminars and discussion groups. To give unity to their work, they will all deal with problems centered around the adaptation and production of one play, *The Tempest*.

John Allen will work with a seminar in acting and directing, developing scenes so that they will play well for children. Other groups will deal with the play from their special points of view. One will consider it as a vehicle



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## RECOMMENDED PLAYS FOR CHILDREN

### Modern Plays

Crazy Cricket Farm  
The Ghost of Mr. Penny  
Little Lee Bobo  
Mr. Popper's Penguins  
Mystery at the Old Fort  
The Panda and the Spy  
Seven Little Rebels

### Historical Plays

Arthur and the Magic Sword  
Buffalo Bill  
Daniel Boone  
The Indian Captive  
Marco Polo  
The Prince and the Pauper  
Young Hickory

### Fairy-Tale Plays

Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp  
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves  
Alice in Wonderland  
Cinderella  
The Elves and the Shoemaker  
Flibbertygibbet  
The Good Witch of Boston  
Jack and the Beanstalk  
King Midas and the Golden Touch  
The Land of the Dragon  
Little Red Riding Hood  
Peter Peter, Pumpkin Eater  
Pinocchio  
The Plain Princess  
Prince Fairyfoot  
The Princess and the Swineherd  
The Puppet Prince  
Puss in Boots  
Rapunzel and the Witch  
Rumpelstiltskin  
Simple Simon  
The Sleeping Beauty  
Snow White and Rose Red  
The Three Bears  
The Wizard of Oz  
The Wonderful Tang

### Plays of Popular Stories

Five Little Peppers  
Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates  
Hansel and Gretel  
Heidi  
Hiawatha  
Huckleberry Finn  
Little Women  
The Nuremberg Stove  
Oliver Twist  
The Pied Piper of Hamelin  
Rip Van Winkle  
Robin Hood  
Robinson Crusoe  
The Sandalwood Box  
Tom Sawyer  
Treasure Island

*The plays listed above will be found fully described and illustrated in our catalogue*

## THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

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of study for the playwright and with cutting and adapting it for effective performance in the children's theater. Others will concern themselves with developing technical effects, exploring the play's ethical concepts as applications of religious principles, adapting it for use with puppets, and considering means of giving it good publicity.

Beyond this, round tables and small group sessions will seek to accomplish two broad objectives: First, to determine what good theater should be saying to and doing for children and to develop means of accomplishing the goals set forth. That is, what can we do to implement the objectives implied in the conference theme and help to develop "big people for a small world"? Second, to point out avenues of future growth and development. The aim here will be to find ways of reaching beyond the immediate influence of those who attend the Conference, to find ways of reaching *you* if you are not now actively involved in children's theater activity. And with your help, we hope ultimately to create interest and activity among church and community leaders, school administrators, library and park boards, museum directors, so as to advance good theater for children as a potent influence in our society.

Perhaps you will be reached and affected most directly by still another featured participant in the Conference pro-

gram. He is Mayo Bryce, Arts Specialist in the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. He will address the Conference on the subject, "Educating the Other Half of Ourselves," dealing with the need for a highly personal kind of self-expression as a part of the total educational experience. Every Thespian knows that this kind of experience is found in the high school theater and would applaud Mr. Bryce for recognizing the need for this kind of opportunity to educate the other half of ourselves.

Of still greater importance to you, however, is the fact that he will attend the Conference to gather information for future United States Government Publications. These publications are distributed without cost to schools and other educational groups and can influence the kind of educational program your school will offer in the years to come.

If this results in a wider recognition among school administrators of the universal need for learning experiences in and through drama, the Children's Theater Conference will truly have helped to begin a giant step forward. Ultimately we should see general acceptance and intelligent use of creative dramatics as an elementary school technique, and the Thespian ideal of a good educational theater program in every American high school will become a reality.

In a sense this places the National Thespian Society in partnership with the federal government since your organization has long been giving its member schools the kind of service the U.S. Office of Education proposes to develop. And soon there will be another member on the team when, later this year, the American Educational Theater Association launches its new High School Theater Conference.

Certainly, this should be a banner year for educational theater, climaxed by your own Eighth National Dramatic Arts Conference in 1960. There is a great satisfaction in being a part of something strong and good. Your director will know that at the Children's Theater Conference this summer, and you can know it too.

The direction in which the educational theater is moving places it in step with the times. Far from being crowded out by an age of science, we are very much needed for the creative spark which we can kindle. Imagination has always flourished in the theater, and imagination is at the heart of everything we call progress. People have always been the very substance of the theater, and greater depth of human understanding must become our common bond if people are to keep pace with progress. In doing your part to build a better theater, you are helping to make a better world.



**T**HE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

**INHERIT THE WIND**

**NO TIME FOR SERGEANTS**

**VISIT TO A SMALL PLANET**

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# A ROOMFUL OF ROSES

Comedy-drama by EDITH SOMMER.

A Broadway hit, this is an unusually appealing play with "a goodly quota of touching and hilarious moments," according to Coleman of the N. Y. Mirror.

3 men  
(1 teen-ager)  
•  
5 women  
(2 teen-agers)  
•  
1 small boy



1 interior set  
•  
Books, \$1.00  
•  
Fee, \$50-\$25

Photo by Eileen Darby, Graphic House

McClain, in the N. Y. Journal-American, wrote, "the end result is gratifying. It has the universal appeal of motherhood and the loneliness of youth; it also has the incomparable boy comic, the busy-body next door neighbor... I don't see how it can miss... Miss Sommer's new play is about attractive people, and it is told with intelligence, taste and a fine sense of the ridiculous in all age brackets. You'll like it."

Atkinson, in the N. Y. Times, called A ROOMFUL OF ROSES "moving... funny."

**THE STORY**, as told by Kerr in the N. Y. Herald Tribune: "Nancy Fallon has, some eight years back, run off with a foreign correspondent, leaving a seven-year-old daughter at the mercy of an unloving father. The bitter father has been at work on the child these long years past. Now he is thinking of marrying again, and Bridget is temporarily shipped off to her mother. When Bridget comes, she is a chillingly defensive, arrogantly independent customer. She has been taught that it is most unsophisticated to mention one parent in the presence of the other, she is sure that it is unwise ever to love anyone, and she is eating her heart out in her defiant loneliness." Bridget's mother and her new husband are eager to have Bridget remain with them, as are a group of kindly neighbors. Dick and his sister Jane, who live next door, do their best to make friends with Bridget, who insists on remaining aloof. Eventually she succumbs to their real liking and is about to go with Dick to a dance when Dick's old girl friend from out of town turns up and Bridget is left without a date. At the same time she discovers her father's reason for sending her on the visit, and the new world she's begun to build with other people falls apart. However, the love and understanding of her mother and the friends in her new home at last make an impression, and Bridget realizes that she is really wanted here — and that this is where she wants to stay. Dick comes back, having realized he prefers Bridget to the old girl friend, and Bridget is at last part of a real family.

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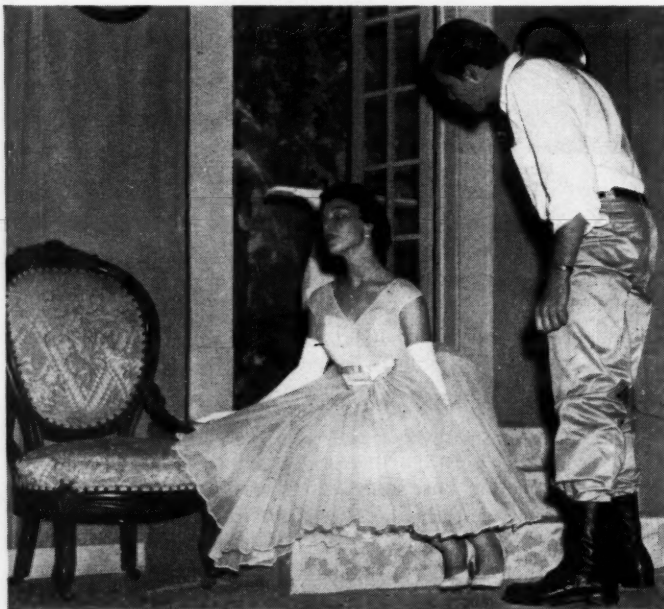
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**The Four Chipmunks**, a novelty song number presented at the Initiation Ceremony, Troupe 479, Rayen High School, Youngstown, Ohio, Lucille Lee, Sponsor



**The Bad Seed**, Troupe 1633, Schulenburg, Texas, High School, I. E. Clark, Sponsor



Two Japanese Noh plays presented by drama students of Immaculata High School, Troupe 1020, Chicago, Illinois, and directed by Anna Helen Reuter. The plays received a superior rating at the recent Chicago Drama Festival.



**A Roomful of Roses**, Troupe 584, St. Joseph, Mich., High School, Betty Theisen, Sponsor



# MATURITY: 1940 TO THE PRESENT

By DELWIN B. DUSENBURY

**D**URING the chaotic war years of the early '40's, America's popular musical theater offered musical productions with a war background or gay vaudeville-type revues produced solely for the purpose of entertaining war-weary audiences. The bright lights of Broadway's musical theater marquees flashed with the familiar names of Cole Porter, Sigmund Romberg, Irving Berlin, or heralded the innovations of Kurt Weill and Rodgers and Hammerstein. Scattered, however, among the bright and brassy productions of the war years, were musical shows by a new generation of musicians and writers—productions which represented the first, and often faltering, steps of E. Y. Harburg and Burton Lane, Harold Rome, Alan Lerner and Frederick Loewe, Harold Arlen, Jule Styne, with Betty Comden and Adolph Green, Leonard Bernstein and Frank Loesser. Before the decade was over, these men, with the aid of stellar casts, kaleidoscopic choreography, startling settings and colorful costuming would demonstrate that America's musical theater was not only the most popular and profitable form of stage entertainment, but also a genuine mature form of theatrical art. The careers of these creative artists provide the final chapter in this history of America's musical theater.

Burton Lane, first, collaborated with E. Y. "Yip" Harburg on the score of *Hold on to Your Hats* (1940), starring, after a ten-year absence from Broadway, one of America's great entertainers, Al Jolson. The "star" and not the score was "the thing" in this 1940 venture, but in 1947 Lane and Harburg, assisted by Fred Saidy, introduced *Finian's Rainbow*, a uniquely delightful satire about an Irish leprechaun, a buried treasure, and racial problems in the mythical state of "Missitucky." Although the race relations theme underlies the plot, the authors skillfully kept the proceedings charmingly fresh and different. In the tradition of *Of Thee I Sing* and *Knickerbocker Holiday*, *Finian's Rainbow* exemplifies musical comedy as both social commentary and delightful entertainment.

Following such jaunty scores as those he wrote for *Pins and Needles* (1937), *Sing Out the News* (1938), and *Let Freedom Sing* (1942), Harold Rome (1908- ), a graduate of Yale in Law and Architecture, wrote both the music and lyrics for a topical revue, *Call Me Mister* (1946), a high-spirited recital of the problems of the returning veteran to civilian life, and another popular revue, *Bless You All* (1950). In 1952 with his score for *Wish You Were Here*, based on Arthur Kober's play, *Having*

*Wonderful Time*, Rome gained recognition as a major Broadway composer. True, Jo Mielziner's theatrical effects, including a \$28,000 swimming pool on stage, and the masterful direction of Josh Logan must be given major credit for the success of *Wish You Were Here* as Broadway's "biggest, splashiest musical." Then, Rome wrote the score for the flamboyant *Fanny* (1954), the musical play based on a trilogy by Marcel Pagnol as adopted by S. N. Behrman and Joshua Logan. The acting and singing of Ezio Pinza as Cesar, the owner of a water-front cafe in Marseilles, and Walter Slezak, as Panisse, concerned mainly with perpetuating his name through marriage and a son, resulted in characters which were not the usual musical theater stereotypes and exemplified, in the words of Brooks Atkinson, "a sign of maturity." Elaborately staged and expertly acted, *Fanny* has been Rome's most successful score, but his current score for *Destry Rides Again*, "an adult western musical," indicates that Rome's name will remain on Broadway for many months to come.

Alan Jay Lerner (1918- ), graduate of Harvard and radio script writer, and Frederick Loewe (1901- ), born in Vienna and early-recognized as a concert pianist and composer, made their Broadway debut with *What's Up* (1943). The year before they had been brought together in Detroit as a composer librettist team for a musical stock company.



Photo, Friedman-Abeles

The delightful Judy Holliday, ably assisted by Sydney Chaplin, typical of the new generation of musical comedy "star," as they appeared in the rollicking and brassy musical, *Bells Are Ringing*

The project had not been a smashing success and *What's Up* was equally unsuccessful. Their second production, *The Day before Spring* (1945), was described by one critic as "sweet and charming," and by another as "tedious." But in 1947 with *Brigadoon* the critics were unanimous in their acclaim. The wistful romance between the American hero and a lovely lass from Brigadoon, a mysterious Scotch village, which comes to life only once every hundred years, proved to be a charming fantasy with melodic rhythms and delightful lyrics. Lerner, next, collaborated with Kurt Weill on *Love Life* (1948) and teamed with Loewe for *Paint Your Wagon* (1951), laid in California during the days of the Gold Rush. With plenty of color, brisk rhythms, lively dancing, *Paint Your Wagon* deals with life in an all-male mining town suddenly invaded by a troupe of dancing girls. In 1956 Lerner and Loewe gave the American musical theater *My Fair Lady*, the best musical play since *Oklahoma!* Based on George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, with an expert cast headed by the lovely Julie Andrews, who had charmed audiences in Sandy Wilson's stylized British musical comedy, *The Boy Friend* (1954), suave Rex Harrison and the superb comedian, Stanley Holloway, *My Fair Lady* delighted critics and audiences alike. While Lerner and Loewe have since written the score for the motion picture, *Gigi*, and have other projects in mind, *My Fair Lady* is proof positive of the fascination and power of the musical theater to universally delight and to emotionally move all who experience it.

Harold Arlen's early experience as a jazz pianist, rehearsal accompanist, and composer for the famed Cotton Club revues in New York's Harlem had led him to Hollywood where he spent some seven years writing for motion pictures. His best-known score was for *The Wizard of Oz* and "Over the Rainbow" won the Academy Award in 1939. In *Bloomer Girl* (1944), written in collaboration with "Yip" Harburg and Fred Saidy, Harold Arlen (1905- ) successfully captured the sentimental and chaotic spirit of the pre-Civil War days in a small upstate New York town where Evelina Applegate (Celeste Holm), the daughter of a hoopskirt manufacturer, rebels against her father and allies herself with her aunt, Dolly Bloomer, who was campaigning for women to wear pantalettes or "bloomers" instead of the cumbersome hoopskirt. Arlen followed the traditional musical comedy formula in *St. Louis Woman* (1946), but *House of Flowers* (1954) and *Jamaica* (1957), featuring the unique singing style of Lena Horne, are rich in satiric commentary and establish Arlen as an inventive and mature composer for the theater.

In the same year that *Bloomer Girl* was entertaining audiences, a talented young musician, in collaboration with one of America's most exciting choreographers, Jerome Robbins (1918- ),



Anne Brown, Todd Duncan (Porgy), and Warren Coleman in the 1942 revival of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, which combined "the drama, the humor, the superstition, the religious fervor, the dancing, and the irrepressible high spirits" of the American negro in a moving and dramatic opera

transformed their ballet, *Fancy Free*, into *On the Town* (1944), an exhilarating musical about three sailors on shore leave in New York. Thus did Leonard Bernstein (1918- ), a graduate *cum laude* of Harvard in Music, make his Broadway debut. He had created music headlines when in 1943 he substituted as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra at the age of 26. Referred to as "the unique, perennial and very American *Wunderkind*," Bernstein today is permanent conductor of that same orchestra as well as the composer of such musical theater milestones as *Trouble in Tahiti* (1952), a short opera written for television; *Wonderful Town* (1953), a musical adaptation of *My Sister Eileen*; *Candide* (1956), a comic operetta based on Voltaire's satiric short novel; and the revolutionary *West Side Story* (1957) with its "Romeo and Juliet theme" sung and brilliantly danced against a background of teen-age gang war on New York's upper West Side.

In *On the Town* and *Wonderful Town* Bernstein's collaborators were the remarkable writing team, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, who in the late '30's had written and performed in a series of miniature satirical revues in New York summer hotels and night clubs. Known as "The Revuers," the ingratiating Judy Holliday was a third member of the team. In 1956 Comden, Green, and Holliday were re-united when the first two members of the team contributed the book of *Bells Are Ringing* for Judy Holliday's debut as a musical comedy star. The music was written by the veteran composer, Jule Styne. Unlike

Bernstein, Jule Styne retains the conventional musical comedy formula in such successful shows as *High Button Shoes* (1947), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1949), which starred the wide-eyed Carol Channing, *Hazel Flagg* (1953), and most recently *Say, Darling* (1958).

Leonard Bernstein's innovations in the popular musical theater coupled with his prestige in the field of classical music make him a significant commentator on trends of the lyric stage. For example, in reference to the success of *South Pacific* he wrote:

... the double soliloquy of Miss Martin and Mr. Pinza in the first act... is an "operatic" device. We accept it because the music is right for the words, and the words are right for the stage-moment. This is true musico-dramatics, because it is natural for the audience. And out of this natural musical theater—one which is unique in the world, and wholly an outgrowth of our culture—is emerging our opera, intelligible to all, exciting, real and fitting.

The assumption that some of today's mature musical plays are really a form of popular folk-opera has been a controversial subject since the Theater Guild's presentation of George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (1935). Gershwin himself described it as "a new form which combines opera with the theater." Having read Dubose Heyward's novel, *Porgy*, Gershwin then lived on the Charleston waterfront, absorbed the sights and sounds, and translated them into America's first folk-opera. But critics had difficulty in classifying it in the same way that in 1956 critics had difficulty in defining Frank Loesser's *The Most Happy Fella*. Most agreed, however, that Loesser had done a great deal to bridge the gap between musical comedy and opera. But then American theater audiences were accustomed to the unusual from Frank Loesser.

Frank Loesser (1910- ), a native New Yorker, after a successful career as a lyric writer in New York and Hollywood, made his Broadway debut with the score for *Where's Charley?* (1945), George Abbott's adaptation of the farce, *Charley's Aunt*. Although Loesser provided a delightful score, the success of *Where's Charley?* must be credited to the amiable and lanky eccentric dance-comedian, Ray Bolger. In 1950, however, Loesser brought to America's musical stage, one of its most fascinating and original scores—*Guys and Dolls*. The importance of *Guys and Dolls*, adapted by Abe Burrows from the stories of Damon Runyon and ably acted by Sam Levene, Vivian Blaine, Robert Alda, Isabel Bigley, "Stubby" Kaye, Pat Rooney, Sr., and others, is best described by Brooks Atkinson:

During the decade in which the musical stage has been developing into a form of art, we have all appreciatively paid our respects to the dynamic unities of "Oklahoma," "Carousel," "Brigadoon," "South Pacific," and "The King and I." They have made art, and also considerable enjoyment, out of a form of theater that used to be a hackneyed convention. But none of them has been written and

## SUMMER ON BROADWAY

ANTA—J.B., Christopher Plummer, Raymond Massey, James Daly. Drama.

BECK—*Sweet Bird of Youth*, Paul Newman, Geraldine Page, Sidney Blackmer. Drama.

BELASCO—*Tall Story*, Hans Conreid, Marc Connelly, Marian Winters. Comedy.

CORT—*Sunrise at Campobello*, Ralph Bellamy. Drama.

46TH STREET—*Redhead*, Gwen Verdon. Musical comedy.

HELLINGER—*My Fair Lady*, Edward Mulhare, Pamela Charles. Musical comedy.

MAJESTIC—*Music Man*, Robert Preston, Barbara Cook. Musical comedy.

PLYMOUTH—*Marriage-Go-Round*, Charles Boyer, Claudette Colbert. Comedy.

ROYALE—*La Plume De Ma Tante*, Robert Dhery. Revue.

ST. JAMES—*Flower Drum Song*. Musical comedy.

SHUBERT—*Majority of One*, Cedric Hardwicke, Gertrude Berg. Comedy.

WINTER GARDEN—*West Side Story*, Carol Lawrence, Larry Kert. Musical drama.

staged with more skill and finish than "Guys and Dolls."

The American musical theater today is not limited only to a Loesser, or a Lerner and Loewe or a Bernstein. One of the so-called "hottest songwriting teams in the country," having composed some 250 songs, was Richard Adler and Jerry Ross. Their partnership resulted in two major musical comedies, *Pajama Game* (1954) and *Damn Yankees* (1955), triumphs of ingenuity and vitality. Ross's untimely death in 1955 deprived our theater of a fine musical talent. Albert Hague's tuneful score for *Plain and Fancy* (1954), rich in local color of the Pennsylvania Amish country, bore out the promise of a talented musical background. His most recent score for *Redhead* (1959) has already lifted Gwen Verdon to a new stellar rank, although she had already established herself as a star in *Damn Yankees* and *New Girl in Town* (1957), Bob Merrill's brilliant musical adaptation of Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie*. The nostalgic sentimentality of Arthur Schwartz's music for *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (1951) and *By the Beautiful Sea* (1954), both starring vehicles for the inimitable Shirley Booth; Gene de Paul's gay musical interpretation of *Li'l Abner* (1956); the fresh exuberance of Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man* (1957), with the dynamic performance of Robert Preston; and the melodic *First Impressions* (1959), a charming musical adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, attest to the continued exploring and experimenting with new themes and complicated rhythms in our musical theater.

Although new, and possibly more brilliant, chapters remain to be written in the history of the American musical theater, it is no longer a gawky adolescent rambling in many directions at once. True, some critics deplore the pandering to public taste, the high cost of production, and the emphasis on tinsel rather than on truth that is to be found on our lyric stage. Still, America's musical comedy—and musical serious—has become indeed a vital, challenging, and mature form of theatrical art.



# THE NIGHT OF THE PAGEANT

By CHARLES R. TRUMBO and POLLYANN

**A**RTISTIC temperaments suddenly blossom all about you. "I'm nervous," "My teeth are chattering," "I've got butterflies in my stomach" are only a few of the expressions heard in the dressing rooms.

Still calm and as dependable as the "rock of Gibraltar," you go among your cast, give a good natured "pat" here, and a word of advice there. Your calm and collected presence puts everyone at ease; yet the tension grows until the lights are dimmed and the music swells.

This is it! The night of the performance.

All the research into the past history of our community will tonight become a living, moving reality before the eyes of the audience. All the work that you as Pageant Director and the work of the other committee chairmen and members will be blended together for a few hours of glorious achievement.

A special gate has been designated "Stage Entrance" for the members of the cast. Each member of the cast has been given a special printed pass of admittance. The pageant cast is so large that, although there are only a few characters who have speaking parts, there may be several hundred members who need some sort of identification in order to be admitted without charge. When the tickets were printed, the Business Manager had a second color of ticket printed especially for cast members. Some business managers simply give a general admission ticket to each member of the cast for his admittance and identification.

The pageant is scheduled to begin promptly at 8 p.m. Two ticket-takers have been stationed at the entrance for the cast. You have some local policemen and members of the American

Legion or Junior Chamber of Commerce who are deputized to assist with the crowd that is expected to congregate.

We shall assume that you have written twenty episodes into your pageant. This will mean that you have several hundred people in your cast. You used not only a majority of the students in your school where the pageant originated, but you invited others who were interested to join the pageant cast to make it truly a community affair. This will give you perhaps twenty or more people to each episode—half of whom will be boys and men. All these will have to have some sort of theatrical make-up applied before the performance starts. Therefore you have installed a system that you are convinced will work.

Fortunately the members of the pageant cast will not need as heavy make-up as they would in an ordinary theater. Lights on a pageant field are not as intense and do not smooth out the features as do the footlights and floodlights of highly equipped theaters. The girls and women will have put on their regular street make-up at home. They will need only to be checked by members of the make-up committee before going onto the pageant field. Every boy and man will have to be "made-up" by members of the Make-up Committee; and remember, there are going to be hundreds of the "brutes" who will need this service.

As Pageant Director you have appointed at least five boys and perhaps the same number of girls to the Make-up Committee. These may be members of the pageant cast who have had some theater experience in the art of make-up, either in your school Thespian Society or local Little Theater.

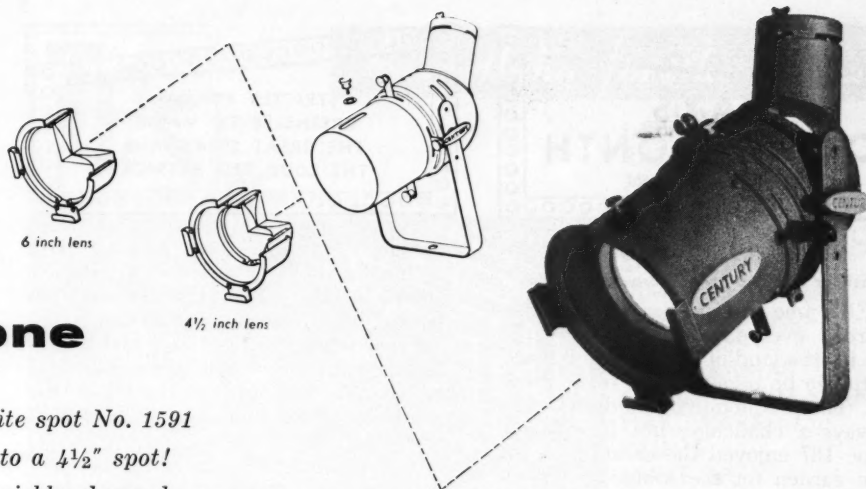
The Make-up committee will do little more than check the make-up on the girls and women to see that a certain amount of uniformity has been followed. All rouge on the cheeks should be placed nearly in the same spot, lipstick may be of different shades but in keeping with the skin coloring of the individual. Last but not least, the mascara must not be too heavy for the pageant lights. The committee will apply make-up to those who do not use street make-up. To the men the Make-up Committee is doing only one thing. They are putting the darkest colored lipstick that could be purchased at your local drug stores on every male member of your cast. There should be members of the Make-up Committee who specialize in character make-up. These are able to apply spirit gum and crepe hair on those boys whom you had to use because you could not find enough mature men in your community to play the parts. Even these will not need a complete theatrical make-up because it will be too noticeable under the pageant lights. No rouge is necessary for the cheeks of the men, only lipstick to accentuate their mouths. Even just applying this will take time, and if you have a large make-up committee, the easier the job will be.

You have divided your twenty episodes into four groups of five episodes that you have numbered Groups I, II, III, and IV. Group I reports to the dressing rooms at 6 p.m. to be made-up and then to dress in their freshly pressed costumes and receive their last minute check-up from members of the Costume Committee before retiring to the spot designated for them to wait their turn for going on the pageant field with their episode or onto the stage of the amphitheater. Group II is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., Group III for 7 p.m., and Group IV for 7:30 p.m. In this manner you can make the most of your dressing room facilities without causing congestion and a last-minute panic.

When members of each episode have



The Battle of Yorktown, a scene from Paul Green's *The Common Glory*, Williamsburg, Virginia



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been made-up and properly costumed, they will go to the location where they are to wait their call, either behind a clump of trees or somewhere out of sight of the audience. There the Episode Director checks the roll of his own particular cast to see who is missing. There will always be late-comers no matter what a director will say. There will also be those members of the cast who have been called out of town at the last minute. These will generally be among those who do not have speaking parts. However, under your careful guidance, each episode director has invited more of his friends and acquaintances to take part in his episode than is really needed; thus the absence of even four or five does not make any appreciable difference. If the absence involves a speaking part, don't panic, just realize that most of the speaking parts have only a very few lines; and very likely someone in the episode can step in and take over, especially if he has heard the absent actor read the part often at rehearsals.

At around 7 p.m. the Business Manager has arranged for the ticket-sellers and takers to be at the main entrances to the pageant field to let the early comers in so as to lessen the last minute rush.

A local organization, either from your school or of your community, has accepted the job of ushering. If there are reserved seats, the Business Manager with the "one in charge" has "briefed"

the ushers as to the appearance of the reserve seat ticket, how to read the seat numbers, and how to find the seat indicated on the stub of the ticket. Those ushers who are assigned to the unreserved section are in their places, and the most important people connected with the pageant, the audience, begins to assemble.

At 7:45 p.m. the orchestra, who have already finished tuning their instruments, starts the overture. It is most effective if the overture contains phrases from each and every musical number used throughout the pageant. If this is too ambitious, classical numbers of chamber music or light symphonic numbers in keeping with the theme of the pageant are most acceptable. Your overture, however, should give your audience "the feel of what is to come." It would be most effective if promptly at 8 p.m. you were to have the narrator to invite the audience to stand and join in the singing of the National Anthem. Since our pageant is based on a very intimate and local, yet important segment in the growth and development of our country, the singing of our National Anthem would be a most appropriate opening.

The lights above the grandstand or rows of seats on which the audience are gathered begin to fade softly while the spotlights focus their glares onto the playing area of the pageant field; the first episode makes its appearance and the pageant is underway.

Backstage the Technical Director and Electrician are standing by the switchboard to make sure that every lighting effect is executed exactly as it was rehearsed for each episode.

Each Episode Director is standing by his cast, continuing to count noses to see that none have wandered away and apt not to be ready to go on the field when called. He constantly reminds them to lower their voices for in their excitement their voices carry farther than ever.

You, as Pageant Director, wander first backstage to remind some Episode Director not to forget some special detail, or to observe without comment whether or not the Scenic Director has seen to it that the Property Committee has "everything under control." Then out in front again to stand and watch the action and listen to the words as though you never heard them before as each episode seems to bring to life, as if by magic, all the glorious past of your community.

And as we stand with you, although perhaps only in spirit, we hear the words of Montrose J. Moses:

"Some day, Americans may find themselves with a new pageantry of such magnitude that children can learn their history from panorama more real than that now given them in the moving picture, and as resplendent as that sustained by the medieval guilds or by the Elizabethan Court."



## PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

### GREENSLEEVES' MAGIC

Brashear Sr. High School, Brownsville, Pa.

EVERY one like to leave this humdrum everyday world once in a while for the land of "once upon a time." It is fun to be royalty, even for just one night. The production of children's plays is always a challenge, but Brownsville Troupe 187 enjoyed the creation of the Castle garden for the Magic of Greensleeves. The seven fellows and ten girls found that the costumes for the play added to the sparkle and eye appeal of the production. The King and Queen were splendor personified in red and white with gold braid trim. (A few yards of red corduroy and white outing flannel with Christmas lace ribbon for braid.) The three Princesses, Matilda, Miranda, and Mary were resplendant in fullskirted satin evening gowns of gold, green, and rose. The evil Grand Duchess wore grey with black and a flowing black velvet evening cape. The Tailor, the Farmer, and the Very Bashful Sailor were dressed in jerkins, doublet, and hose of brown, purple, and orange. The Hero Greensleeves wore an outfit similar to that of another English favorite of forest green. With cork walls and lattice from the window trimmer's stock of a local merchant and with the lovely lace patterned iron porch and lawn chairs and settee in white, the stage was indeed transformed into a fairy tale castle garden.

The plot centers on the unhappy kingdom under the tyranny of the wicked Grand Duchess, who has forbidden the King and Queen under penalty of death to ever use the words sing, laugh, dance. The Grand Duchess fears only one thing, the magic of a wandering fellow known as Greensleeves. When the Princesses express a desire to know about the

### STRICTLY FORMAL GREENSLEEVES' MAGIC THE GREAT SEBASTIANS THE LOUD RED PATRICK

strange words that they overhear their parents use, Greensleeves arrives in answer to their thoughts. He teaches them about his magic in a dream scene, and they learn to laugh, sing, and dance. The three strongest men of the kingdom are not able to keep the magic from the princesses whom they have been sent to guard, and rather enjoy their trip to the Magic Garden. Finally the Princess Miranda learns the secret of the magic, and the spell of the Grand Duchess is broken forever.

Cast and audience, both the young in years and those who are young in heart, enjoy the freshness and the lovely music of the old folk tune that has enjoyed a recent revival in popularity. High school students enjoy being folk from another time and another world, and the elementary school age audiences are thrilled to see their favorite stories come to life.

JEAN E. DONAHEY  
Sponsor, Troupe 187

### THE GREAT SEBASTIANS

Webster Groves, Mo., High School

A VAUDEVILLE combo doing a mind-reading act is caught behind the iron curtain when their bookings carry them to Prague in late 1948. This is the background for Lindsay and Crouse's latest comedy, *The Great Sebastians*, which recently completed a successful run at our Little Theater.

Although this play is complicated by a cast of twenty, the use of three different sets (we designed them to fit inside one another — thus when one was struck, the next was ready), and a word code for the mind reading scene, we felt we had to try it, for this year we had the personnel to do it correctly.

Taking advantage of the Christmas holidays, much of the set work was



The Great Sebastians, Troupe 191, Webster Groves, Mo., High School, Blanche Ganahl, Sponsor

completed before rehearsals started. Although the rest between our December show, *Death Takes a Holiday*, and the start of this was short, the idea of being one of the first high schools to produce *Sebastians* and the challenge presented by the play motivated us to a quick start and continued our enthusiasm throughout the ensuing six weeks. Actually work had begun before the previous show was finished — we were going to do it right!

Having so many sets, lighting proved to be more of a problem than it originally appeared. As the scenery was being shifted, our electric crew had to replug the board (fortunately we have a flexible one) as there weren't enough dimmers to handle the load. This proved to be both easier and cheaper (an important fact in this expensive show) than renting additional equipment.

Because of the fine cooperation of everyone, furnishing the set wasn't too hard — antiquing a desk to fit into the Louis XIV style was the only major job. Restyled World War I uniforms were our answer to the Czech army uniforms; costumes actually proved to be one of the easiest facets of the show.

This show provided a great opportunity to show off our talents in acting, as well as the technical end. The Sebastians themselves must of course be carefully cast. We were extremely fortunate in having two seniors just made for the roles. The play also has a good many bit parts which provided an opportunity for new people to gain experience. One of the high points of the show came in the first scene when Essie and Rudi do their act for the audience — no "plants" used.

The play is fast moving and has some hilarious business. The ending is sensational. We would recommend this show highly. It is hard, but the reward



Greensleeves' Magic, Troupe 187, Brashear High School, Brownsville, Pa., Jean Donahey, Sponsor



is thrilling. *The Great Sebastians* was a high point in our twenty-seven year history. Mrs. Mildred Fredericksen was our director.

R. MOODY  
Business Manager, Troupe 191

### STRICTLY FORMAL

Tahlequah, Oklahoma, Senior High School

**STRICTLY Formal** by William Davidson recommends itself to the busy director who needs to produce a good play with a minimum of time and effort. The play is an excellent choice for a number of reasons. First of all it does not require any great degree of maturity for the roles. This is a real boon to the coach dealing with young and inexperienced actors.

This comedy is simple to stage. We used the cyclorama with just enough props to suggest a modern living room scene. The one set is used throughout the play. There are no lighting problems. It is easy on the budget. Costuming is easy, as school clothes are worn in the first two acts. Act three shows the cast in attractive formal dress, which appeals to both performers and audience. There is no difficulty with make-up, as mostly straight make-up is required.

The plot is popular and timely. With the Senior Class Dance less than two weeks away, the girls still have no dates. Their dilemma is further complicated by the arrival of a man-eating cousin from New York, a case of the mumps, and a war among the dads. The members of our cast loved their roles in this heart warming play which is full of laughter crammed lines that simply talk themselves.

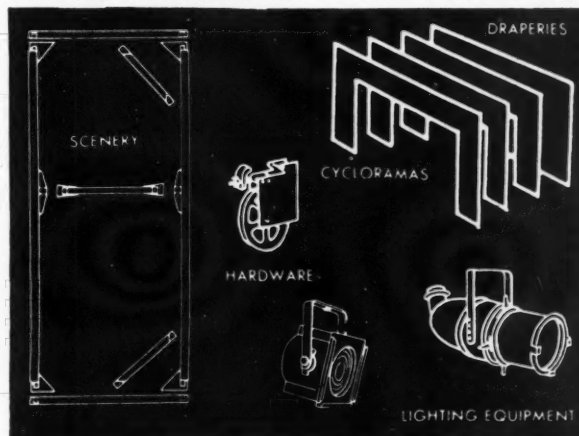
*Strictly Formal* is a worth-while and stimulating play expressing well youth's ideas, dreams, problems, and ingenuity. Producing it is a most rewarding experience.

MARY UPDEGRAFF  
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**Strictly Formal**, Troupe 836, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, Senior High School, Mary Updegraff, Sponsor

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### THE LOUD RED PATRICK

Cristobal, Canal Zone, High School

**THE** problem of getting Papa to approve of a marriage when he is convinced that a college education is a requirement for the well-rounded young lady is not a new one. Troupe 217 with the help of the Dramatics Club found a lot of fun and hard work in connection with this problem which is portrayed by the *Loud Red Patrick*. This is a play which takes place in the early 1900's when college education for girls was not too well thought of - which further complicates the situation.

Patrick, the father, is a man with a loud red temper. He prides himself on running his family democratically. From Patrick's words, "I sometimes find it necessary, for the good of the whole, to sway the votes of the younger ones," one can tell that Patrick is a little evasive in his democracy.

This play has a cast of four boys and five girls which facilitates casting in a small school. All the roles offer a good chance for acting.

As you can imagine, early 1900 furniture is a little hard to come by on the Zone but we managed to get together a reasonable facsimile. Sound effects were a riot of fun from start to finish between the pranks of the two little girls and the boyfriend, Ralph's Stanley Steamer.

The two little girls are ages seven and ten. We were extremely lucky in having two small freshman girls who suited the parts well, and both did an excellent job. The two older sisters were no problem to cast, and the two young men were

cast with equal ease. We were fortunate in having two seasoned Thespians for the two older male roles, and a member of our Dramatics Club did a superb job with the housekeeper of the family.

This play was a pleasure to present and was received with hilarity by the audience. For any small yet highly active group this play receives excellent recommendation.

CLAIRE WHITE  
Secretary, Troupe 217

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Next Issue

OCTOBER

# Thespian Chatter

## YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

### Troupe 479

In honor of the 30th Anniversary of The National Thespian Society, we held a formal initiation ceremony on January 21, 1959, at the First Presbyterian Church. The members and initiates invited their parents. Our president, Judy Schwartz, opened the program by welcoming the parents and explaining to them about the anniversary. Then the initiation ceremony was held.

Following the initiation, as is the troupe custom, the new initiates performed skits. One group consisting of Malka Greenberger, Betty Randell, Paul Stetts, and Sandra Tracey pantomimed the "Chipmunk Song." The audience liked it so well that they received an encore. Other groups did a flapper skit, a restaurant scene, and a take-off on Steve Allen.

We held a short business meeting, and during this we gave out stars to the members having 20 or more points and one honor bar and pin to Marlene O'Neill.

We made our principal, Andrew M. Lindsay, an honorary member of the troupe. After the meeting refreshments were served. — Marlene O'Neill, Secretary

## TULSA, OKLAHOMA

### Troupe 14

On October 31, 1958, at 4:00 p.m., seventeen members were installed into the new Thespian Club at the comparatively new Thomas A. Edison High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The new Troupe 14 was installed by Central High School's Troupe 817, Mrs. Ione B. Freeman, sponsor. Refreshments were served to Central's Thespians by the new club members immediately following the ceremony.

Previous to the installation ceremony a meeting was held to elect the officers who would serve Edison's first Thespian club. Meetings are held every other Thursday, and we alternate the afternoon and morning meetings. Following the afternoon meetings we have a few minutes of entertainment. One of the favorites of the club is movies of past activities.

In the Christmas assembly at Tulsa Edison the one-act play, *Coins of His Kingdom*, was presented. The cast included Thespians as well as students aspiring to be Thespians. Standing committees have been formed, and they will function for the first time during Edison's first speech-arts play. This will be presented sometime in March.

The future looks bright for this new troupe. Great plans are being made for the future. The interest, enthusiasm, and cooperation from the members, as well as the hopeful members, are most encouraging. — Gloria Griffin, Secretary

## WATERVILLE, MAINE

### Troupe 1258

The National Thespian Society and the Thalpomene Club of Waterville High School began its season of dramatic productions by presenting *The Thirteenth Chair*, a mystery in three acts by Bayard Veiller. For two nights the play was very well received by a large and appreciative audience.

Following the excitement of the three-act play, the Thespians immediately began rehearsals for the State One-Act Play Contest. They presented *Blue Stocking*, a heartwarming dramatization from Conrad Richter's Pulitzer Prize Novel, *The Town*. Waterville was host to and participated in the sectional and regional play contests. The play was very successful being a winner in the state final and receiving a high rating at the New England Drama Festival in Montpelier, Vermont.

The Thalpomene Club also presented a thrilling evening of entertainment by sponsoring

three one-act plays: *Winsome Winnie*, *Rich Man Poor Man*, and *The Dear Departed*. The club also sponsored the annual junior and senior speaking contests. — Scribe

## SYRACUSE, N. Y.

### Troupe 1700

Our Nottingham High School Thespian chapter, less than two years old, launched the 1957-58 season with a Thanksgiving pageant, *Cavalcade of America*, presented at a school assembly.

Thereafter, we devoted ourselves exclusively to recruiting and rehearsing musical and dramatic talent for our major spring production, *The Boy Friend*. Our busy, strenuous rehearsal schedule was temporarily interrupted by a trip to New York, made by our adviser and twelve members of our cast, to observe the off-Broadway production of *The Boy Friend*. Finally, after countless rehearsals and months of preparation, we presented our play on May 16. The cast and club were delighted and encouraged by the enthusiastic reception accorded *The Boy Friend*.

Our dramatics year concluded with the induction of ten new members into our troupe of the National Thespian Society. The entire troupe anticipates a coming year as exciting, stimulating, and profitable as the one we have just enjoyed. — Lee Supnik, Scribe

## GENESEO, ILLINOIS

### Troupe 71

With our Thespian troupe bearing the bulk of the burden, *Our Town* was given as last year's senior class play in our high school. In fact, the young Troupe 71, now in its third year, furnished the director, lighting technicians, stage hands, make-up artists, the leads, and twenty-two of a cast of thirty.

The influence of Thespian training was evident not only in the selection of this high-caliber drama, but also in performances given by the cast. This sincere and perfected acting was demanded because of the lack of scenery and meager props used in the play. Extreme simplicity of this staging intensified the drama's striking philosophy.

The city paper confirmed the capabilities of our Thespians with "The imagination of the audience was completely captured by the realistic portrayals of the town folk in the story, with touching scenes bringing tears to the eyes of many." — Marcia Rivenburg, Scribe

## LONGVIEW, WASH.

### Troupe 699

Thespian Troupe 699 successfully completed four major dramatic activities. Our year began with the senior play, *Around the World in 80 Days*. A funeral pyre, a snowstorm in the Rockies, and an Indian fight added interest and excitement to our performance.

Because the all-school play, *The Family Nobody Wanted*, centered around a minister's family, we sent complimentary tickets to our local ministers.

In conjunction with International Theater month, our annual Thespian assembly was presented. Using the theme "East Meets West," a Japanese pantomime, a Charleston, a Chinese play, a prison drama, songs from the musical *Oklahoma*, and Latvian folk songs were combined to make the assembly one of the most enjoyable of the year.

Our Jack and Jill players completed eleven performances of *Beauty and the Beast*, which they presented to 2700 children. We are proud of our activities because they enabled us to increase our membership by twenty-five and to install a new Thespian troupe at Mark Morris High School. — Margaret Edin, Secretary

## LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

### Troupe 1578

*Dino*, by Reginald Rose, was the highlight of last year's dramatic season at Fairfax High, here in Los Angeles. After seeing a production on Studio One, *Dino* came to Fairfax and was the biggest success in many years.

Troupe 1578 also distinguished itself by having two of its members win second place in the annual Southern California Shakespeare Festival. A striking and memorable Memorial Day Assembly was also presented by the Thespians as a tribute to the war dead.

Fairfax is beginning to expand, dramatically speaking, as an after-school dramatics club, known as the Masquers, was formed. Its purpose is to give those who are aspiring to become Thespians an opportunity to gain experience while, being lower-classmen, they are ineligible to try out for the senior play.

All in all, this past semester has been very profitable, and with the added popularity of dramatics, here at Fairfax, even better semesters are forecast. — Heery Lynn, President

## APPLE CREEK, OHIO

### Troupe 851

The Thespian activities for Troupe 851 were many and varied. Many of our members appeared in the two class plays, *The Curious Savage* and *Meet Me in St. Louis*.

Our one-act play, *The Sisters McIntosh*, received a superior rating in the County and an excellent rating in the state contest. We also received a state first for our radio play, *My Client Curly*. The climax of our busy year came with our presentation of two one-act plays, a comedy called *Sunday Costs Five Pesos* and a mellerdrama, *Egad! What a Cad!*



Love Is Eternal, Troupe 1248, Highland Springs, Va., High School, James McDonald, Sponsor



We worked long and hard and enjoyed all these plays from the beginning rehearsal to the final curtain. — *Mary Sterling, Secretary*

#### WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WIS. Troupe 1718

Troupe 1718 had its first birthday in March, 1958. A one-act play, *Just What They Wanted*, and a reading were part of the Christmas program. An unusual tableau closed this program: instead of the usual crib scene, a satin-robed Madonna holding the Infant was surrounded by spruce trees of varying heights. Inside the infant's wrappings an electric light was concealed which lighted the Madonna's features. Changing colored lights were played upon the scene while the assembly sang traditional carols.

A three-act thriller, *Murder Takes the Veil*, was presented last May. One of our major projects — attendance at the Theater Workshop, sponsored by the LaCrosse Unit of the Catholic Theater Conference and held at Regis High in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, had to be cancelled because of winter road conditions. — *Fran Podvin, Secretary*

#### DUBUQUE, IOWA Troupe 69

Troupe 69, under the direction of Sybil V. Lamb, had an outstanding 1957-58 dramatic season. Three successful plays produced for capacity audiences were *Dino*, *The Family Nobody Wanted*, and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*.

We were proud of our one-act play, *A Marriage Proposal*, which won highest state honors. Two of our Thespian boys merited outstanding actor awards in this contest. Our Thespian Troupe sponsored an after-game dance last year as we have in past years. Along with this we had other projects to make money.

Some of our members attended *The Rivalry* at Waverly in October. The play starred Agnes Moorehead, Raymond Massey, and Martin Gabel. Among the outstanding events of the year were our initiation, banquet, and picnic which honored the out-going seniors. We feel we have had a very successful year and hope to have another one this year. — *Beverly Bottge, President*

#### DALLAS, OREGON Troupe 943

Troupe 943 had its most successful year to date in 1957-58. We started out the year with a large production, *Love Is Eternal*, in the fall. We were lucky to have a 6'4" boy, Gary Henry, who when made up resembled Lincoln so much that the audience let out a gasp on his first appearance on stage. He later went on to be on the all star basketball team of the state. Mary Todd was played by Joy Gaither who was later chosen by her fellow Thespians as Best Thespian of the year. In February we presented our annual one-act play festival for the school assembly and in the evening for the public. In the Spring we presented the comedy, *Bernadine*, which was petitioned for by the boys of our Troupe. We had the largest audience to date for this production and feel that it was very warmly received. We presented *Bernadine* on a new grade school stage that didn't have any curtains and found that this play adapted to such a situation nicely. In May we had our annual Senior Awards Banquet. We had 22 graduating seniors this year. Two of the graduates are planning on majoring in dramatics in college. At the banquet we presented the annual awards. The best actress and best actor were from *Love Is Eternal* and the supporting actor and actress from the production of *Bernadine*. This proves that we had two well balanced productions last year. We are looking forward to an active year this year. — *Scribe*

#### JOLIET, ILLINOIS Troupe 1305

Busy, busy, busy! was troupe 1305's theme song last year. Major productions included *Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *The Angry Twelve*, *Brigadoon*, *Panorama in Jazz* (an original), and a Sunday afternoon program of one-acts in-the-round.

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## CHATTER

(Continued from Page 27)

The cast of last year's play contest entry, *Shadow Play*, joined our private hall of fame by capturing a second place. Digging into our records, we found that Joliet entries in the state play festivals since 1950, our first year of participation, won 3 firsts, 2 seconds, 1 third, and 1 seventh.

We particularly enjoyed participation at the Thespian Regional Conference at Lansing, Illinois, where our student-directed dance-drama, *A Slave with Two Faces*, was given a first place trophy.

Two formal initiations welcomed 30 new members and our annual banquet brought the traditional "Elwood" awards to deserving members. We feel that our busy year has brought much experience and great enjoyment. — *Charlene Westerwelle, President*

### ANGOLA, INDIANA

#### Troupe 1264

Troupe 1264 performed before the largest crowd ever to attend a production in the history of the school at a recent presentation of *You Can't Take It with You*. It was highly received as well as *The Family Nobody Wanted*, which our troupe presented the previous year.

In 1958 we presented three one-act plays, initiated new members into Troupe 1264, and sponsored a school program. Our troupe is growing in membership and is highly successful in everything it does. We owe the greatest amount of praise to our troupe sponsor, Robert Seigal. We are looking forward to an even more profitable year in 1959. — *Connie Crain, Treasurer*

### VERADALE, WASH.

#### Troupe 250

Thespian Troupe 250 had a successful 1957-58 season. *Heaven Can Wait* and *Twelve Angry Men* were the plays presented. Both of these plays were well attended and enjoyed by everyone who saw them. Troupe 250 is trying to bring better drama to high school theater, and both plays were chosen with that aim in mind.

*Heaven Can Wait* was done arena style. As we have no stage, this was presented in the gym. This type of production was enjoyed by both the actors and the audience. Props and sets were kept to a minimum so that all attention was focused on the actors.

Simplified staging was the feature of *Twelve Angry Men* too. The pace and suspense of the play appealed to the audience, and the minimum set was easily within reach of our facilities. — *Carol Giboney, Scribe*

### WHITEHOUSE, OHIO

#### Troupe 1717

Troupe 1717 had a very busy season last year. In December we presented three one-act plays by our sponsor, Roy Williamson. These

## 1959 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1960

- MINNESOTA** . . . . . Memorial High School, Ely, Minnesota, Elizabeth Gjervik, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 576, May 9, 1959.
- NEW YORK** . . . . . Great Neck South High School, Great Neck, New York, Bernard Boressoff, Program Chairman; Charles L. Jones, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 861, Port Jefferson, New York, High School, May 16, 1959.
- OHIO** . . . . . Bryan High School, Mabel Robrock, Sponsor, Troupe 227, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, October 17, 1959.
- OHIO** . . . . . Washington High School, Massillon, Ohio, Robert C. Pfendler, Sponsor, Troupe 178, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, November 6, 1959.
- OREGON** . . . . . University of Portland, Melba Day Sparks, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 124, Jefferson High School, Portland, March, 1960.
- FLORIDA** . . . . . Chamberlain High School, Tampa, Florida, Winifred Lively, Sponsor, Troupe 165, Program Chairman; Paul Fague, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 177, Wm. R. Boone High School, Orlando, February 27, 1960.
- PENNSYLVANIA** . . . . . Mt. Lebanon Sr. High School, Pittsburgh, Pa., Julian T. Myers, Sponsor, Troupe 1603, Program Chairman; Jean Donahey, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 187, Brashear Jr. High School, Brownsville, Pa., April 30, 1960.

plays, *Kip*, *Interlude*, and *Rachel* were very well received. *Rachel* was entered in the Bowling Green State University One-Act Play Contest where it won a superior and best of its class award.

Our second production was *Smilin' Through* and proved to be one of the most successful ever produced at our school. The speech class assisted in this production by doing all the back stage work as a class project.

The last production of the year was *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. This fast moving comedy was an excellent choice to close the season. — *Philip Hertsfeld, President*

### MAGNOLIA, OHIO

#### Troupe 1524

Spectacular posters, done principally in dark colors and bearing the hideous figure of one "Jocko," all but dared readers to view the play titled *It Walks at Midnight*. The opening scene was an original one done in dim blue lights with black light added. There were no lines,

but Jocko's actions and the sound effects set the stage for the mystery comedy that followed. The play will never be forgotten, and two characters will be largely responsible for the remembering.

The happy but mentally unbalanced Paulina, who lived the lives of several people in her imagination, changed quickly and convincingly from one to another throughout the play to everyone's amazement.

Jocko, who was made up positively professionally by our art teacher-director, was a hideous looking creature who adopted a perfect posture for the role. At the conclusion of the play he sent chills up the spines of patrons by walking through the isles in search of another victim. Better known plays have been produced but we doubt if any will be better remembered. — *Karen Kesling, Scribe*

### KNOXVILLE, TENN.

#### Troupe 1352

During the past year the members of our Thespian troupe have occupied themselves in taking part in the two school productions of the year. The first, *Home Sweet Homicide*, yielded quite a few new members to our troupe. The second, *A Date with Judy*, was considered one of the funniest performances to have been given in our high school. The money cleared from these two productions was used to pay for new sets of scenery for the dramatics department.

Another project of Troupe 1352 was to sponsor an assembly program of new student talent. The number of people who participated is significant of the great talent found among high school students. We feel that we have had an enjoyable year as Thespians and are looking forward to an even better one this year. — *Carol Murphree, Scribe*

### PANHANDLE, TEXAS

#### Troupe 1698

Is your troupe short of money? As a money-making project, why not sponsor a speech festival? For the past two years we of Troupe 1698 have sponsored a week of speech activities. The reasons for this week are two-fold: to bring before the public good plays, monologues, readings, debates, and other activities of our troupe, and to raise money.



**Blithe Spirit**, Troupe 970, Willamina, Oregon, High School, Sally Edmiston, Sponsor

Last year our speech festival began on March 10 with the initiation of new Thespians at a banquet. The president of our troupe, Cloyd Bender, was presented with the "Most Outstanding Thespian Award." Another featured event was the presentation of the play, *On Borrowed Time*. As a money-making project, we find this week to be original and profitable. — *Alberta Apel, Reporter*

#### WAYNE, MICHIGAN

#### Troupe 670

Students of Wayne Memorial High School and citizens of Wayne enjoyed five wonderful plays presented during the school year of 1957-58. First, the comedy, *Stag Line*, was presented and enjoyed by all. Next, *Kind Lady* was given and rated a great success. *Arsenic and Old Lace*, a wonderful play, was presented and rewarded with applause from a delighted audience. *Happy Journey*, presented in the play festival at Wayne University, won high acclaim from the critics. The year was brought to a close with Troupe 670's biggest project, Children's Theater. *Winnie the Pooh* was presented and had the honor of being the first play to perform in our new auditorium. It was a great success and consisted of four performances, allowing approximately 4,000 children to see the play.

The Thespians also enjoyed a banquet at the year's end, in which nine students were initiated. The banquet also included the presentation of the Best Thespian, entertainment, and a delicious dinner.

Ten members of Troupe 670 attended the annual Dramatics Arts Conference at Purdue University last year. — *Darlene Lucas, Secretary*

#### LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

#### Troupe 1370

Most of the Thespians of Troupe 1370, Westchester High School, Los Angeles, California, participated in last spring's production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* This musical play was wonderful fun for all of us, an exciting challenge, and a terrific money-maker! We had two very satisfactory matinee audiences, and filled our 1250-seat auditorium for two night performances. Any troupe anywhere in the country would, we feel, find the producing of this play an unforgettable experience. Will any of us ever forget the rousing chorus of "Oklahoma" or the opening of the show with the strains of "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning"!

Several members of our troupe were entered in the annual Shakespeare Festival, April 26, held on the beautiful UCLA campus. Marjorie McPeak, a Thespian, won second place in Individual Acting Scenes. The program was made more enjoyable to us by the appearance, at the end of the afternoon, of Robert Ryan and Shelley Winters reading scenes from *The Taming of the Shrew*. Mr. Ryan also was the guest speaker at the event. — *Glen Wright, Scribe*

#### STOUGHTON, MASS.

#### Troupe 1675

Forming the hub of the dramatic club, members of Troupe 1675 enjoyed an enthusiastic season during 1957-1958.

Two full length plays were sponsored. Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* was presented as the organization's December play. *The Family Upstairs*, a comedy by Harry Delf, was sponsored as the senior class Spring play during a two evening performance. Both plays were well received by local audiences.

Percival Wilde's *The Finger of God* was presented in the one-act play contest of the Massachusetts High School Drama Guild Festival. The presentation marked the Stoughton High School Dramatic Club's first appearance in this tournament.

Individual club members and the dramatic club's verse choir combined efforts in presenting programs before school and other local groups at various times during the school year. Also during the year, visits were made to witness college and other high school play performances.

Thirteen neophytes were welcomed to the Thespian Circle of membership when initiation ceremony time arrived for Troupe 1675 at school year's end. — *Scribe*

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### THREE WALLS OF MAGIC

(Continued from Page 11)

stage movements," Ronald Eden explains. "He makes contrived speeches emotional and meaningful; he makes the mechanical stage-crosses casually natural. But in his moments of silence, with nothing to say or do, the actor gets his best opportunity to create and to act. Here he listens and reacts."

Do not wait to make a stage-cross before your lines. For example, if you have a comment to make on the weather, get over to the window before-hand and look out a while first. You move on the reason for the action, such as indicated by the line "I'll take that paper outside." Besides giving the platform a balanced, tableau look, all stage "blocking" and "business" must have a reason.

The American Academy teaches such basic rules as movement and the main methods of acting technique. One method concerns thinking and doing and feeling on a stage in a role. With this system, devised by Charles Jehlinger, an Academy instructor for 55 years, the actor puts more stress on the thoughts his character is thinking than exact wording of his dialogue, his next cues, or bits of "business." He compacted the method into three words: "Thought, Theme, Mood."

"At the Academy I learned to maintain 'Thought, Theme, and Mood' until something comes to change it," Meri Ann states, "and I find it extremely helpful advice."

Another piece of advice deals with small bit parts. It's not the size of the part but what the good actor can do with it that counts. A minor character helps the principals solve their problems and gives them support or advice to make matters worse. A minor character aids in keeping the plot moving, provides needed "comedy-relief" or other contrast, and adds to the atmosphere or setting of the play.

A smaller role is harder to play than a larger one, because the script tells very little about it. So the bit player must create something out of nothing; this is the highest form of the actor's art.

For example, in *Winterset*, a non-speaking hobo enters the scene and lays under the apartment pipes to sleep and get warm. This shows the apartment owner's kindness, arouses a bad guy's anger, provides a contrast to the noisy activity in the room, and tells the audience that scene takes place at night in bitter-cold weather. With good acting, the audience will almost see the pipes.

"There's no basic difference between enacting comedy or playing in melodrama," Tom O'Hagan reveals. "Only the values change. Comedy is more intellectual and stresses the trivial. Drama is more emotional and stresses serious problems. Yet in both types of plays, there's emotion. For, as the Academy says, nothing in the theater is of any real value without feeling."

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Tom cites an example. A man wearing pajamas and entering a living room, where a formal party is taking place unknown to him, would be embarrassed. And that would be funny comedy. But a man wearing pajamas in the living room would be heavy drama if he were just out of a sick-bed for the first time and tried to defend his wife from a would-be murderer in his weakened condition. In either case, he would be motivated by emotion and maybe by a goal he is after.

What an actor does off-stage in preparation is as important as his on-stage work. Much of a good actor's time is spent in doing written background research on his character's past and traits. He makes a chart listing the things the playwright says about him as he first enters, what other characters say about him, and what he say of himself in his own dialogue. He divides the chart into his physical description including clothing, his mental description including his education or lack of it, and his emotional description including traits such as temper or gentleness.

This background study helps him to really know the kind of person he is to portray, whether he uses the data on stage or not. He'll be more convincing in the part, and the audience will more easily understand him, "feel" for him, and can identify itself with him. Because of added assurance that preparation brings, he'll suffer less from stage-fright.

"First, I read the play to get an over-all picture of the characters and the action," confesses Harryetta. "Next, I analyse my part—comparing myself as much as possible to the person I am to enact. Then I pick out dissimilar traits, so I won't be playing myself but the playwright's character. This helps me to understand the role and to enact it."

(3) *How does a beginning player prepare himself for an acting career?*

Taking dramatics or not, he can read library books on acting technique or theatrical history. He can make faces at himself in the mirror and become aware of the lines and bone structure of his own face to clearer understand the art of make-up. He might visit his local television or radio station for some performing "tricks of the trade."

The beginning player can rotate his head in a circular motion to relax his vocal cords and can practice yawning to stretch his throat muscles. He might try fencing with a stick to develop grace and poise and bounce in his feet.

A young Thespian doesn't need the

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three walls of magic on a stage to learn how to speak properly; the four walls of his own room will do nicely. Here he can try holding a lighted candle near his lips and speaking some prose or poetry without accidentally blowing out the flame; he can't be breathy on a microphone.

"I searched New Jersey for the girl in the purple girdle' is one of my pet vocal exercises," remarks Tom O'Hagan. "Another is 'But I already fixed the electric mix-master for her!' It's really helpful to see how many meanings you can get by accenting a different word each time."

Also he can say his ABCs, based on the vowels A, E, I, O, U—and starting with "Bay, Be, Bye, Beau, Boo."

This do-it-yourself training isn't enough; any serious actor needs dramatics in school. He needs a teacher's supervision, correction, and verification.

"Until I came to the Academy," confesses Ron, "I was acting instinctively—sometimes right, sometimes wrong. Now I know what I'm doing, and how and why."

At school, the new actor learns make-up, costuming, stagecraft, pantomime, and speech as well as other related subjects. At school with audience reaction, he has play production experience in various roles, so he may find his proper place as an actor and combine all his knowledge of acting and of living.

"The Academy broadens your outlook on life; you see it clearer and understand it better," believes Harryetta, as do the three others. "You become truer to yourself and your own belief of what you know to be right in your work."

"The Theater is so big there's room for anyone," encourages Meri Ann. "There's no such thing in it as a no-talent person. If you love it, you'll find it can love you back—the teachers, the directors, and your fellow actors—the people who are Theater."

To Ronald Eden and Thomas O'Hagan as well as Meri Ann Narancic and Harryetta Peterka, the three pieces of scenery are more than stage decorations. They really *are* three walls of magic!

## A GHOST COMES ALIVE

(Continued from Page 10)

friend and protector, Goetz. In an attempt to get a fair hearing for their grievances, he reluctantly agreed to be their temporary general on their solemn promise to abstain from further violence and to obey his orders like "gentlemen soldiers"—a promise they promptly ignored. This of course gave his enemies the very opening they needed, and when the revolt was put down with even more ruthlessness than the rebels had practiced, Goetz was imprisoned. Here, and later in his castle, to which he was allowed to return on parole, he wrote his memoirs.

Some two hundred years later, Germany's greatest romantic poet, Goethe, then a young law student in Frankfurt, stumbled across this work and was immediately inspired to make a play out of it "in the manner of Shakespeare." This he did (in six weeks) spicing it generously with love-interest, intrigue, battle scenes—even adding a sort of medieval Ku Klux Klan. But his first draft was so sprawling that it took two years of pruning to cut it down to workable size. Its production by the Hamburg National Theater in 1773, however, won immediate success. The play has been a popular item in German repertory ever since.

The story of the present production at the Goetzenburg (Goetz's ancestral castle) is even more romantic. In the days of the Allied occupation, following World War II, Dittrich, Freiherr von Berlichingen found himself in a prison camp on the staff of which was a young American officer who happened to be acquainted with German history and drama. Once, while chatting with this officer, the young baron mentioned that his home was the Goetzenburg, the very castle where his doughty ancestor, the Knight of the Iron Hand, had been born, and in which Goethe had laid many scenes of the play.

"My heavens, man," exclaimed his American friend, "why don't you put the play on? It would be terrific to see Goetz come alive right in his own courtyard!"

The idea stuck—and grew. Why not? The courtyard would easily hold a thousand spectators, and still leave ample playing space. The inner facade of the frontal wing would make a fine scenic background, with a gothic alcove at one side and a balcony on the other where interior scenes could be played; and some—how do you say—"terrific" entrances could be made through the central sally port. Would people come to see it? Well, Jagsthausen is only a pleasant drive from Heidelberg and Heilbronn, and is surrounded by spas; there should be some good summer resort trade here. And the castle is easily accessible from the village, being set on a flat lawn instead of a mountain peak. Ample parking space is available.

When he returned home, Freiherr Dittrich set about producing the play. The villagers fell in with the idea at once, not only organizing a *verkehrs-bureau* (a tourist chamber-of-commerce) to handle the promotion, but turning out *en masse* to provide soldiers, retainers, rabble—all the minor roles and "walk-ons." The principal characters were entrusted only to seasoned professionals, of whom, even as in America, plenty were found eager to fill in the slack summer season with a fat part in a distinguished play. A top-flight director was engaged, Goethe's fifty-three sprawling scenes were cut and fused into eighteen, rehearsals started, costumes and properties were assembled (many of them from the family's private museum), and early in the summer of 1949 the play opened. It has been playing to full houses three nights a week and a matinee on Sunday every summer since.

After her husband's untimely death in 1954, the Baroness Olga carried on the production. It was under her aegis that the writer saw a thrilling performance last summer—and spent the night in the guest wing of the castle in a lovely room overlooking the moat and the lawn, fitted out with genuine (but comfortable) XVII century furniture, with a private bath "big as a squash court" as the Baroness put it. The cost, including breakfast and a ticket to the play, was \$4.13!

We dined (along with a bus load of students who had come over from Heidelberg) in an enchanting little restaurant that had been fitted up on a balcony overhanging the river, and just outside the great hall. Here we were joined by the Baroness, who gave us some bits of family history and a brief synopsis of the play (very useful, since no English versions of the program were available). She also warned us that, once the performance began, we could not get back to our room, the entry to the guest wing being used as a setting for the Bishop's palace.

The play begins with Goetz on a foray against his arch enemy, the Bishop of Bamberg. He returns home, bringing with him a prisoner, none other than his boyhood chum who has been lured over to the enemy by the blandishments of the Bishop's court. They are welcomed by Goetz's wife and little son (played by the heir to the Berlichingen title), and by his sister Maria, who promptly falls in love with the prisoner-friend. This turncoat, though he pledges eternal loyalty to Goetz and plights his troth with Maria, soon defects again, when he falls under the spell of a court seductress (in the pay of the Bishop), and even leads an expedition against his former friend, who has meanwhile joined the revolting peasants. Some stirring scenes take place when the courtyard echoes to the tramp of hoofs and mailed feet, and blazes with the torches of the rabble. The drama reaches real poignancy as Goetz and his retainers, besieged in their

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own castle, melt down the rain spouts to make bullets and drink a toast to freedom with their last flask of wine.

Lured out of his castle by false promises of amnesty, Goetz is captured and imprisoned, after a spirited defense of his rights and liberty before a corrupt court. Here Goethe has employed poetic license by having the old eagle die in captivity with the cry of "Freedom!" on his lips. But not until the villains get their comeuppance: Adelaide, the lorelei, who has tired of the husband she enticed away from his old friend and new fiancée, poisons the turncoat just as he is about to sign a pardon for Goetz, but dies herself at the hands of the "Secret Tribunal"—an anonymous band that meets in stealth to avenge "by the steel and the cord" crimes not punishable by the courts.

Goetz's expiring shout of "*Freiheit!*" rings in the spectator's ears long after the actors have left the stage. And, as he watches the largely German audience file out of the darkened courtyard, the American visitor cannot help wondering what is going on in these minds, many of whom had so recently bartered *freiheit* for *lebensraum*. From the enthusiasm and sincerity of their reaction—far deeper than mere appreciation of a brilliant performance of a popular play—it is evident that the ghost of this old champion of liberty and defender of the oppressed is very much alive in their hearts.



# BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH



**STAGE SCENERY AND LIGHTING**, Samuel Selden and Hunton D. Sellman. 1959, 3rd Ed., Appleton-Century-Crofts; 394 pp.

After more than twenty years this standard text has been revised and brought up to date in a field where materials, methods, and vocabulary change frequently. The first half of the book, *Scenery*, by Prof. Selden, has been slightly rewritten throughout, changing a few terms and illustrations; but the chief difference is the addition of two new sections: a simplified, easy-to-follow set of directions for making a perspective sketch of a set, and a chapter on recent experiments in staging arena and outdoor dramas. The other decisive change is in the color system: instead of the old standard system of red-blue-yellow pigment primaries, the new edition advocates the system of magenta-yellow-cyan primaries and red-blue-green secondaries.

The second half, *Lighting*, by Prof. Sellman, has had the more thorough rewriting, for in this section there is not only a lot of rearrangement of chapters and topics, but a considerable amount of up-dating in discussion of new methods and equipment, such as electronic dimmers, etc. Probably the best single improvement in the third edition is the new series of half-tone illustrations, which reflect the amateur and educational theater in America much better than did the original photographs in the first edition. This is still probably the best, most concise, reasonably priced scenery and lighting book in the field.

**GUIDE TO PLAY SELECTION**, edited by the Committee on Playlist of the National Council of Teachers of English. 1958, 2nd Ed., Appleton-Century-Crofts; 178 pp.

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Prof. Joseph Mersand of Jamaica High School, N. Y., has redone the original *Guide* edited by Prof. Milton Smith of Columbia in 1934. The format remains much the same: each entry includes information on type of play, period, settings, cast, costing, and royalty and book charges; a sentence or two to summarize the plot; and a brief evaluation of the play according to the Committee's standards. The original classifications have been retained: full-length plays, arranged alphabetically under four periods (Greek and Roman, Medieval and Renaissance, 1650 to 1870, and Modern), and one-acts. There are also two new categories: television plays, several of which have since been lengthened and adapted to the stage (not mentioned here), and guidance and mental health plays. Long plays number 430 and one-acts, 294. Much of the book is devoted to listing 536 play anthologies (each volume's contents named in full for easy reference) and a brief but significant annotated bibliography on play production books.

The preface states that the Committee considers these plays good for "school, college, and community theaters," but the director of the average high school troupe will not find too much here that lies within his scope; for the majority of the plays require pretty advanced casts, as well as highly trained directors. The "typical" high school play, even the occasional good one, is not found in this list. Few good directors will quarrel with the plays that are selected of course, for they are certainly of indisputable quality. Many, however, may question such decisions as the recommendation of only two Moliere plays: *The Merchant Gentleman* and *The Miser*, the latter described as "the only serious play by Moliere suitable for amateurs." Surely a cast that could do these

two could do equally well *The Imaginary Invalid* or *The Doctor by Compulsion*!

**PLAYS OF 1957-1958**. Stacey Publications, 9 Houndsden Road, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21; 64 pp.

This list of all plays published in England in the specified years gives, as does the preceding *Guide*, information on production facts, rather lengthy synopses of the plots, and frank, nut-shell evaluations of the scripts. Aside from the plays published by Samuel French of London, whose publications are of course also obtainable from French of New York, the other scripts would not be readily available to American buyers. But, if some of the plays appeal especially, ordering from London is not an impossibility; one needs only to order in time. Categories include full-length comedies, dramas, thrillers, and plays for all women; and one-act comedies and dramas for mixed casts, all-women comedies and dramas, plays for young people, and religious plays.

**THEATER U.S.A.**, Barnard Hewitt. 1959, McGraw-Hill; 528 pp.

There may be nothing new under the sun, but it is also true that every now and then a new combination of old things comes along and fills an existing void as nothing else can. Thus, for example, the primary-source book of original documents, so popular in fields like history and sociology, has been adapted to the field of theater history to provide not only a fascinating account of the American theater between 1668 and 1957, but a distinctive "You Are There" flavor that no other such history has been able to give us. In the author's own words, the book records the high-lights of the commercial theater through eye-witness accounts of the "change in the drama, acting, scenery, lighting, costing, theater building, audience, organization, and operation." These first-person reports — comprising roughly three-fourths of the book — are taken from letters, books, diaries, periodicals, autobiographies, journals, play programs, and so on. The other fourth of the book is made up of the author's own commentary that ties together the reports and fills in the gaps — although, as he says, he has not intended that this be a full history touching on all the good plays and playwrights in almost three hundred years. What is included is as interesting reading as one could hope to find, especially such high moments as description of Kean's triumph in Philadelphia, the Astor Place riot, and Edwin Booth's playing of Hamlet; Poe's review of Mrs. Mowatt's *Fashion* and the contrast of the reviews of the early O'Neill plays with those of the revival of O'Neill in the past decade; and Eddie Foy's account of the fire at the Iroquois Theater in Chicago. This is therefore not an encyclopaedia in which the reader will find all the facts he may want to know about the American theater, but it is a book which will evoke a feeling for great experiences in the theater than no amount of facts alone will transmit.

**STANISLAVSKI'S LEGACY**, edited and translated by Elizabeth Hapgood. 1958, Theater Arts, Inc.; 182 pp.

Mrs. Hapgood, long the official translator and interpreter of Stanislavski to the English-speaking people, has performed another unusual chore. She has collected excerpts from letters, writings, and speeches of Stanislavski throughout his life and, by putting them into juxtaposi-

tion, revealed more clearly the basic tenets on which he built his so-called "method" of approach to a work of theatrical art. Her hope is that this format might show up the common misunderstandings of his aesthetic principles; for, she contends, "the over-intellectual approach, the over-emotional approach, as well as the over-physical approach were all alike alien to Stanislavski in his search for truth." Many of the ideas will be especially interesting to the educational theater worker: for example, Stanislavski protests that one must take pleasure in the ideas of the play, not merely the "joy of creativeness," for theater people should emulate other artists who try to "educate their public."

At another time he said, "Type-casting may speed up an actor's work and loud declaiming will mask its poor quality." After asking, "Have you not noticed that it is more difficult for us to define what we *feel* than what we *do* in exactly the same set of circumstances?" he reminded his cast for *Othello* that they should use physical action as a means to the end of acquiring psychological, or inner, action. To an aspiring young woman who wanted to join his company, he said: "Confess that someone told you that an actress doesn't need any education? And that a genuine talent succeeds by intuition in grasping what others have to learn by hard work and knowledge? They say that such lucky people exist, but alas, they are rare, very rare, and I have never seen a single one. . . . You must work all your life to develop your mind and perfect your inner self. . . . To develop properly you must have general knowledge and study systematically."

The most delightful selections in the book are the director's accounts of his associations with Chekhov and of the Theater's producing of his plays: "Chekhov's characters cannot be 'shown,' they can only be *lived*." He explains why Chekhov insisted that his plays were not tragedies, but comedies — almost gay farces. Perhaps out of this association came this principle: "You must not live on the stage for the purpose of entertaining the spectators, you must live for yourself." Only then will the actor arrive at "spiritual realism." Space permits no more quoting, but this relatively small book is filled with wisdom and interpretations of life as seen through theatrical art that no one really interested in the theater can afford to miss.

**GOOD STORIES AND HOW TO TELL THEM**, V. Spencer Goodreds. 1958, Denison; 250 pp.

A little off the subject of theater, but perhaps something useful for the dramatics clubs' end-of-the-year banquets and assembly programs, this book is one of the better ones among the many in the area. Prof. Goodreds has some sound advice for the toastmaster, program chairman, introducer of speakers, etc. He ably discusses how the good story, with a point that is tied in with the point the speaker wishes to make, is told with maximum effect. But the majority of the pages are filled with really good, witty, clean stories, most of them anecdotes by or about well-known people, that are well worth having on file. They are gathered under headings such as Teachers, Sports, the Church, Entertainment World, Politicians, and so on. Even if one has little use for the materials, he will enjoy reading the book.

**A GLOSSARY TO THE PLAYS OF BERNARD SHAW**, Paul Kozelka. 1959, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, N.Y.; 55 pp.

Prof. Kozelka states that he produced this alphabetical glossary of unusual names, terms, and words in the plays of Shaw to help students "understand certain words and expressions which are uniquely Shavian or peculiarly British." When necessary, proper pronunciation is also indicated, as well as definition and explanation of each term. Certainly this inexpensive paper-backed booklet will be of great help to anyone who is producing or reading Shaw, and would be a wise acquisition for any drama library.

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